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No. 2228

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GULF WAR REFUGEES FLOOD JORDAN

Paris LE MONDE in French 9 Oct 80 p 4

[Text] A "desert bus" (a kind of trailer on wheels pulled by a truck-tractor motor), international transport trucks, special buses chartered to evacuate foreigners. Traffic between Iraq and Jordan seems to be moving despite its density, all along the 800 kilometers of desert that have to be crossed to get from one capital to the other. But at the border, there is an indescribable traffic jam.

The presence of Ba'ath militia on the Iraqi side does not make things any easier. Armed with machine guns, ominous-looking men are supposedly helping out customs officials check those crossing the border. Very young men in camouflage uniforms decorated with very odd looking epaulettes, are particularly worked up. There is a feeling that at any moment anything might happen. Too bad for those who do not know how to move by discretely. In a bar, a European woman who has apparently undergone a customs search even more picky and stupid than usual is crying, her nerves frayed.

On the Jordanian side there is a different kind of person, a different way of life. "Socialist" spying and red tape are over with. But King Hussein's Bedouins are not ready for such an influx of refugees and very few speak any language besides Arabic. At midnight Friday the presence of a Peugeot with a French flag draped across its hood at the entrance to the kingdom was a lifesaver for mothers, harried by the trip, not knowing what to do, without their husbands, who had stayed behind in Baghdad to continue work on the worksites set aside for foreign businesses.

Standing up next to the Peugeot there is an official from the cultural service of the French Embassy in Jordan and a Lebanese who works for the Spie-Batignolles Company who are expecting 310 women and children. The two of them are particularly helpful with border formalities since they speak Arabic. Cookies and hot drinks are served.

Even once the precious visa is procured, the travelers' troubles are not over. The hotels are full and there are long waiting lists at the airport. There are additional flights, but so many of them that sometimes there is not enough fuel to fill up the gas tanks, a situation which causes considerable turbulence on the flights.

The embassy is doing its best to find lodgings--for some in a school, for others in an officers' club that the Jordanian Army is letting them use. The official from the cultural service takes our names down and the names of the reporters with us, assuring us that he will inform the embassy of our unexpected arrival. Around 0300 hours the doors actually do open for us at the French mission. A hotel room shared by four people is better than spending the rest of the night out on the street after all. The message is transmitted and measures taken for us and for the refugees.

On each of his trips out of the country, the head of state emphasizes the "very important role" which French working outside the country are playing in the rise of the French economy. There are numerous examples which show the torpor of the administration if not the indifference or inability of its representatives to help when these French need their consulate or their embassy.

This time in Jordan, as in Kuwait, where the refugees fled by way of southern Iraq, the officials at the Quai d'Orsay met the challenge. A mere flag on a car in the cold desert night at the entrance to the Hashemite kingdom--lots of English, of Germans, of Italians wished it had been theirs.

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ALGERIAN AIMS IN WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT ANALYZED

Rabat L'OPINION in French 8 Oct 80 pp 1, 2

[Article by Fatima Belarbi: "How Far Can Algiers Go?"]

[Text] Since the start of Operation Ouarkziz last March our southern provinces have undergone an extensive mopping-up operation designed first of all to destroy the pockets of refuge of the mercenaries from Algiers, and secondly, to seal off the Algerian-Moroccan borders in order to prevent any infiltration by the enemy forces based at Tindouf.

The most recent communiques of the mercenaries from Algiers--which (as usual) report countless Moroccan losses--actually reflect the defeats they are suffering at the hands of the Moroccan Army, which is determined to mop up the northern region of the Moroccan Sahara completely. The third mobile El Arak group has completed the operations it had already begun, that is to say, its operations at Ouhoud and Zellaka. Its mission is to mop up the region between Tan-Tan and Tarfaya as far as Smara, a strategic point leading to the Atlantic coast. The two aforementioned operations (to be specific, only a few elements of the groups involved) are mopping up the region situated beyond Bouizakarn and Tan-Tan and extending all the way to the Algerian border. It is there that the vast Ouarkziz range of hills extends (and the broad plateau of Hamada begins), and it is also there that the mercenaries from Algiers believed they could find shelter from which to carry out harassing actions against small localities such as Akka and Tata (which are situated not far from the Oued Draa), or Zag, which the mercenaries had announced they had encircled and captured last March (at the very time we were present there).

Even if it is true that for a while--that is to say, at the outset of the conflict--the enemy (for a number of reasons) did have the initiative, the situation in the field has changed since then. The Moroccan Army has been reinforced in materiel and men (something that is absolutely indispensable in view of the immensity of the recovered Moroccan lands), has been organized, and knows equally well both the enemy terrain and tactics: it cannot be taken by surprise henceforth. It will from now on have the initiative, and the engagements that are currently taking place in the South are the result of the large-scale mopping-up operation undertaken by the Moroccan Army, which has the mission of controlling and monitoring the thousands of square kilometers involved.

To be sure, writing and speaking of the Saharan provinces is one thing and observing at first hand while traveling through the provinces is another, and it is the latter course which will mirror at their true value the courage, self-sacrifice and

gallantry of the Moroccan troops, who shrink before nothing and are ready to make the supreme sacrifice for a sacred cause: the territorial integrity of Morocco.

Five years have already elapsed since the beginning of the conflict. Some speak of an imminent peace, while others speak of a change in attitude on the part of the Algerian leadership. One thing is certain, however: Libya's definite commitment in the conflict in northwest Africa, a commitment that is on an increasingly large scale. This menacing role being played by Tripoli is far from pleasing to Algiers, which appears not only disconcerted but anxious over the long-term objectives of the Libyan president, and it is undoubtedly the main reason for the questions currently being raised as to the Algerian position.

Is the recent Algerian-Mauritanian rapprochement therefore a means of counteracting Tripoli's increasing influence in Mauritania, or is it an effort to safeguard the alliance with Nouakchott in the event of a conflict with Morocco--and in such case is Algeria prepared to declare war on Morocco? Are there today two quite distinct factions of the so-called "Polisario"--one under the aegis of Algeria and the other under that of Libya?

In these circumstances, will Algiers attempt to regain control over its "creation," or will it seize the opportunity to withdraw from the conflict, leaving Tripoli alone to struggle with the problem and to "measure swords" with Morocco?

If it is true that the problem has until now remained the same--that is to say, if it is true that the conflict is between Algeria and Morocco (and in our view the infiltrations of the mercenaries from Tindouf into Moroccan territory are proof that Algiers has not changed its attitude)--it is no less legitimate to pose another question: "If the Algerian leadership has had the best of it to date (by making a rather heavy across-the-board investment in the financial, political and diplomatic areas), is it prepared to involve its army and its people in a war for a territory to which it professes to have no claim?" We shall have the answer when the Moroccan Army is at the gates of Tindouf.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY ARABIZATION BUREAU MEETING

Casablanca AL BAYANE in French 17 Oct 80 p 6

[Text] The fifth meeting of the consultative committee of the Bureau for the Coordination of Arabization in the Arab World opened in Rabat on 10 October and closed last Wednesday morning.

The closing session was presided over by Dr Abdelkrim Khalifa, who read the following recommendations:

1. Increase the number of copies printed of the magazine AL-LISAN AL ARABI (published by the bureau) to 507,000; expand distribution of the magazine; and strive to publish the magazine in a satisfactory manner.

2. Give priority consideration--in distributing the magazine--to public libraries, universities, and scientific and linguistic institutions.

3. Consolidate relations between instructors who are specialists in different scientific sectors, on the one hand, and scientific and linguistic institutions both inside and outside the Arab world; and organize specialized seminars.

4. Invite the Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science to carry out a survey of Arab experts (and particularly those who are in foreign countries) so as to utilize their knowledge in the areas of science and Arabization.

5. Include other modern languages in the abridged dictionaries of the Bureau, which has to date been limited to the French and English languages.

6. Consolidate contacts between the bureau and the Arabization committees in Arab countries and universities.

7. Include linguistics, sociology, anthropology, economics, information, archaeology, astronomy and the arts (notably music and design) in the plans presented by the bureau for submission to the Fifth Arabization Congress.

8. Organize two seminars to be given by Arab experts in preparation for the Fifth Arabization Congress: one concerning the preparation of abridged dictionaries covering vocational and technical subjects, and the other concerning the preparation of abridged dictionaries for use in higher education.

9. The bureau should establish contacts with the linguistic centers in Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus, Amman and Rabat--and with universities and linguistic institutes in the Arab states--with a view to keeping abreast of their decisions concerning methods used to develop scientific terminology, in order that these decisions may be communicated to all concerned sectors in preparation for the seminar on the unification of Arabic terminology.

10. Establish continuing cooperation between the bureau for the Coordination of Arabization, the Linguistic Institute of Algeria, and the Institute for Study and Research in Arabization, located in Rabat.

The administrators of these institutions are requested to submit to the Arabization congress a memorandum indicating the aspects of cooperation and complementarity, and the means of [balance of sentence illegible].

11. Create an Arabic terminology bank at the Bureau for the Coordination of Arabization; respond to the need for the bureau to contact the international terminology banks with the aim of cooperating with them in respect to publicizing Arabic terminology and drawing on their experience in this field; and strengthen the bureau through the utilization of new techniques that will enable it to carry out its activities.

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CSO: 4400

MOROCCAN-TUNISIAN PHOSPHATE SECTOR COORDINATION

Casablanca MAROC SOIR in French 9 Oct 80 p 1

[Text] Tunis, 9 October (MAP)--Tunisian Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali on Wednesday received, in Tunis, Mohamed Karim El Amrani, general manager of the Moroccan Phosphates Office, and the members of the Moroccan delegation who accompanied him on his visit to Tunisia.

The meeting took place in the presence--among others--of Tunisian Minister of National Economy Abdelaziz Larbaa; Mohamed Tazi, ambassador of His Majesty the King in Tunis; and high officials of the Tunisian phosphates sector.

At the conclusion of the meeting El Amrani said it had afforded an opportunity for the two parties to analyze the various aspects of Tunisian-Moroccan cooperation in the areas of extraction, treatment and marketing of phosphates.

He added that "the talks held by the two parties during the visit by the Moroccan delegation to Tunisia are a continuation of the talks which Mohamed M'Zali had held with Moroccan officials during his most recent visit to Morocco. These talks," he said, "were held within the framework of the directives of President Bourguiba and His Majesty King Hassan II, with the aim of strengthening cooperation between the two countries in building the Great Arab Maghreb--a complementary front that is independent economically and technologically as well as politically."

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CSO: 4400

REGIONAL MARITIME ISSUES DISCUSSED

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 7 Aug 80 p 12

[Article: "Gulf Ports Will Face Difficult Situation and Vast Idle Capacities as of 1980 Because of Enormous Expansion"]

[Text] In the study he presented to the fourth session of the General Conference of the Arab Chambers of Commerce which was held in Bahrain last April, Natiq Rushdi al-Sukuti, the economic expert in the [Kuwaiti] Chamber of Commerce and Industry speaks about the unions and organizations concerned with maritime cooperation in the Arab Gulf. Al-Sukuti enumerates eight organizations concerned with this cooperation.

He says: There are several authorities and organizations concerned with strengthening or coordinating Gulf maritime cooperation. Some of them are Arab and their sphere of operation and activity extends to the Arab Gulf area, others are non-Arab and a third group comprises all the Gulf countries, including Iran.

Moreover, the Arab organizations and companies specialized in the sphere of oil cooperation have also contributed to strengthening some aspects of the Gulf cooperation.

Following is a review of the eight parties concerned with Arab Gulf maritime cooperation:

1. The United Arab Maritime Company

Gulf maritime cooperation among shippers is considered one of the most successful Arab cooperation experiences because it is a union [presumably referring to United Arab Maritime Company] that enjoys planning, coordination and implementation powers, contrary to many of the Arab organizations concerned with Arab economic cooperation whose powers do not go beyond the phase of planning, coordination, exchange of information, preparation of studies and participation in conferences and seminars.

The United Arab Maritime Company is considered one of the most successful unions of Arab shippers.

There is no doubt that the pioneer role in creating the United Company belongs to the Kuwaiti Maritime Company which was (abandoned) on logical bases in the interest of Arab Gulf maritime cooperation. Creation of the company is also due to the absence of any conflict in the interests of the constituent members. These are the two main reasons behind the success of this experience.

All the Gulf governments, with the exclusion of the Sultanate of Oman, are partners in this company. Moreover, Kuwait's stock in the company is owned by both the private and the public sectors. The company is considered the biggest Middle Eastern maritime company, considering that it owns at present 62 modern ships of good specifications with a capacity of 1.4 million tons of dead load and with an annual shipping capacity exceeding 4 million tons. The company is a member in many international maritime unions and operates on several international maritime routes to the world's important ports. The company is experiencing at present some difficulties embodied in the lack of Arab maritime cadres, in the current recession in the maritime shipping market, in the sharp competition among shippers, in the inadequacy of the advertizing on the part of the company and in its not being given preferential treatment by most of the Gulf states. All this has had an impact on the company's financial position and on its potentials for expansion in reliance on its own resources.

The company, by virtue of its representing the contributions of the Gulf governments, experiences some aspects of contradiction in the shipping policy generally and this compels it to adopt at times policies and positions favoring the interests of the Gulf importer over its interests as a shipper. This is done in response to the government line in some Gulf countries--a line that often favors the interest of the government importer. This position is reflected in the maritime conferences in which the company is represented and is a position that compels the company not to coordinate with these conferences' positions that serve the shippers.

2. Arab Union of Maritime Shippers

This is one of the unions emanating from the Arab Economic Unity Council. This union was founded in 1979 and its headquarters are in Baghdad. The union's goal is to defend the Arab maritime shippers, to express views on maritime policies and legislations, to help its members form a general policy and to unite their efforts in conducting technical, economic and legal research and studies, to express its views on issues pertaining to maritime safety, to conduct studies on the possibilities of setting up Arab organizations concerned with maritime inspection, registration, financing, middlemanship, mediation, insurance, maritime agencies and to encourage the creation of an industry to (provide and resupply) ships and an industry for maritime rescue and towing. The union accepts three kinds of members: Active, associated and observer members. The union's agencies are the general assembly, the board of directors and the general secretariat.

The number of the union members reached 17 by 2 February 1980 and the majority of them (53 percent) are Arab Gulf states. It is very difficult to assess the union's work at this early stage, especially since it was founded recently. However, whoever examines carefully the union's constitution and the memorandum

"justifying" its creation--a memorandum prepared by the General Secretariat of the Arab Economic Unity Council--can notice that the union's main role does not deal with executive matters concerning the Arab maritime shipper but rather deals with the issues of planning, the exchange of information, training and coordination, participation in Arab and international conferences and the preparation of research and studies, keeping in mind that this union will find difficulty in getting highly specialized cadres to implement its goals, especially since such cadres are scarce in the Arab world at present and since it is better to channel such specializations toward developing the Arab maritime shipping companies and organizations that do engage in executive activities.

3. Gulf Ports Union

This union was formed in 1976 and its headquarters are in al-Dammam, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Its members are comprised of all the seven Arab Gulf governments. The motive behind the creation of this union was the desire of these states to develop their ports, to attain a degree of coordination in their activities and to exchange experiences, information and specializations among the ports of the member states, including cooperation to reduce overcrowding in the Gulf ports and to prepare to set up a regional union including all the Gulf ports.

The union consists of a board of directors and a general secretariat. When reading the provisions of the agreement establishing this union, it seems to the objective analyst that the main motive for the creation of this union was to deal with a transient manifestation, namely the crisis of overcrowding or of "bottlenecks" in the Gulf ports during the 1974-78 period, and the subsequent need to establish minimum coordination and meetings among the Gulf port authorities. It seems that the union focuses on goals connected with coordination, planning, exchange of information, training, participation in conferences and the convocation of seminars without having the power to draw up a visualization or a plan to develop the Gulf ports and to set up specialized ports that reduce the multiplicity in the construction of fully equipped ports in all the area's states, with the enormous waste of investments that such a multiplicity means.

Moreover, the union does not have any executive power at the level of the Gulf ports. This underlines the absence of a Gulf agency capable of coordinating the activities and policies of the Arab Gulf ports. This absence may raise the issue of the development and maritime policies of the Arab Gulf states and the degree of the preparedness and of conviction among these states on the need to establish minimum coordination in this sphere, keeping in mind that the Gulf ports will face an extremely difficult reality in the 1980's as a result of the enormous expansion in the capacity of the ports, the multiplicity in the construction of piers and the transformation in the Gulf maritime shipping technology toward containerized shipping and (roll on-roll off) ships--all of which will create vast idle capacities on the piers of these ports as of 1980.

4. Union of Arab Ports

This union was established recently and its headquarters are in al-Basrah. It is one of the unions emanating from the Arab Economic Unity Council and its goals are to realize a degree of cooperation, coordination and exchange of information

among the Arab ports. This union was founded recently and we have not acquired detailed information on its structure or any evaluation of its activities.

5. The Regional Maritime Environment Protection Organization

This Gulf organization was formed in 1978 and its headquarters are in Kuwait. It includes the seven Arab Gulf countries and Iran. The organization seeks to safeguard and develop the maritime environment and to protect it from oil pollution and pollution with other harmful substances resulting from increased maritime activity. The organization is comprised of a council which includes the member countries, a permanent secretariat and a judiciary committee to settle disputes.

It can be said that this organization can provide the minimum coordination and cooperation among the Gulf states in this sensitive sphere, namely safeguarding the Gulf maritime environment and curtailing the destructive effects of the pollution that accompanies the increase in economic activity.

6. Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries [OAPEC]

This organization's main contribution to serving the Arab Gulf maritime cooperation lies in [its] adoption of the idea of setting up the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Company in whose capital each of Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Libya, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have participated. The company has a giant drydock that can accommodate ships with a load capacity of 500,000 tons. The drydock is considered ideal for repairing giant tankers but cargo ships with giant capacity can also be repaired and given maintenance in this drydock.

The organization's second activity in the sphere of maritime cooperation is embodied in its complete proposals for setting up three maritime academies in Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Qatar to supply the Arab fleets with the manpower specialized and trained at the various levels with the aim of Arabizing the crews of the Gulf ships which rely to a large degree on non-Arab manpower.

The third activity is embodied in the studies conducted by the OAPEC legal agencies on the possibility of unifying the Arab maritime legislations.

This organization can study the possibility of setting up a Gulf company specialized in refuelling ships in a manner similar to the experiment of the United Arab Maritime Company, especially since some of the Gulf countries have already set up such companies which engage in extensive activities outside their regional borders.

7. Arab League and Its Specialized Agencies

The Arab League and its specialized agencies engage in tangible activity in the sphere of Arab maritime cooperation. There is not enough space here to mention all the proposed projects, projects under study or projects under implementation. However, we will focus on some of these projects which pertain to the Arab Gulf area in particular, namely:

A proposal to set up an Arab maritime academy in Sharjah to graduate Arab maritime cadres.

The project for the Arab organization for inspecting and registering ships. This project was proposed by the Arab League Permanent Communications Committee and is currently under implementation.

This organization seeks to register, classify and inspect Arab ships to provide them with the elements of safety. Initial approval for the establishment of this organization was given at the Riyadh conference held in February 1980. Kuwait will be the headquarters of this organization. There is no doubt that providing the organization with the cadres, the elements of operation, the powers and the support will enable the Arab countries, particularly the Arab Gulf countries, to enter this vital sphere of the maritime activity.

8. Arab Gulf Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Their Unions

In the Gulf, there are not any chambers of maritime shippers and shipping representatives or of (owners of shipped goods). The chambers of commerce defend the interests of many of the parties involved in the ma itime activity, with focus on importers and on defending their interests vis-a-vis the shippers, port authorities, customs authorities, banks and insurance companies, considering that the consumer's interest is tied primarily to the importer's interest in this regard. These chambers have had some commendable positions in defending the interests of the Gulf importers against the illegal practices of some shippers. This is in addition to the position that these chambers took by confronting the Lloyds Insurance Group when this group unjustifiably raised its war risks fee in the Arab Gulf area in 1979.

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BRIEFS

IRAQ, JORDAN AGREEMENT--Amman, 16 Nov (INA)--An agreement was signed here today between Iraq and Jordan to transport passengers by road. Under this agreement, regular trips will be organized between Baghdad and Amman, according to schedules to be worked out later. The agreement was signed for Iraq by Nabhan 'Abd al-Majid, director general of the Organization for Passenger Transport, and for Jordan by 'Adnan al-Mufti, director general of the Tourist Transport Company. [Text] [JN161214 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1055 GMT 16 Nov 80]

CSO: 4802

AFGHAN INVASION CONDEMNED BY EUROPEAN LEFT

Critical View of European Left

Rome AVANTI! in Italian 8 Oct 80 p 7

[Article by Massimo L. Salvadori: "The USSR Also Has Its Vietnam as the European Left Faces the Drama of Afghanistan"]

> [Text] To carry out an effective action in defense of the struggle which the Afghan people is putting up against the invader, one break away from theoretical prattle; when the PCI [Italian Communist Party] denies the imperialist nature of Soviet aggression, it is expressing an unacceptable judgment.

1. There are two essential questions here. The first is this: what can the European Left and, in particular, the Italian Left, do for Afghanistan? The second one is: what problems does Afghanistan pose for the Left?

Quite a few parties have noted that Afghanistan is now a kind of Vietnam for the USSR. This is an analogy which is undoubtedly well-founded and which immediately suggests a line of action for the Left: support for the principle of self-determination of peoples, for the sovereignty of smaller nations, and, hence, support for the partisan forces which are fighting, regardless of their ideologies, for national liberation.

Unless, of course, the acceptance, within the Italian Left, of the analogy between Vietnam and Afghanistan is anything but discounted. The major portion of the Italian Left has not had any difficulties in feeling the duty of mobilizing in support of Vietnam against United States policy because its categories of theoretical and historical judgment induced it, so to speak, quite naturally, to define that policy as imperialist and to refer to the struggle of the Vietnamese partisans and of North Vietnam as a struggle in defense of national liberty. The United States is the strongest capitalist country of the world and the Left, due to its entire theoretical tradition, was persuaded without any problems to establish a direct relationship between the United States, capitalism, and imperialism.

I am personally convinced that it is correct to refer to Afghanistan as a Soviet Vietnam not only in the more external significance, that is to say, because the USSR is in a position as a power plunged into an operation where it must face a partisan guerrilla force of major proportions, but also in the deeper sense because the USSR is playing the role of an imperialist power in Afghanistan. The difficulty facing a large portion of the Left springs from accepting this second meaning and this in turn is derived from the theoretical position which I would call a theoretical superstition, according to which imperialism can have only a capitalist connotation.

2. In one of his recent interviews in CORRIERE DELLA SERA, Enrico Berlinguer expressed himself in terms that follow the PCI's position, in general, on the international policy of the USSR and, in particular, on the legitimacy of establishing a link between the policy of the USSR and imperialism. He asserted that Soviet policy in the international field may well be inspired by criteria of big-power policy but that this policy cannot be called imperialist because imperialism is a historical and theoretical attribute of capitalist expansion. L'UNITA a few days ago confirmed the communist position by disclosing that aspects, such as current Soviet policy in the Indochinese Peninsula, in the Horn of Africa, in Afghanistan, etc., represent individual aspects of a policy which cannot be boiled down to a worldwide hegemonic design, where the term hegemonic stands for "imperialist."

All of this implies, on the communist side, the possible condemnation, in terms of "errors," of individual aspects of Soviet policy but it also hints at a refusal to boil that possibility down to its global nature. The motive is evident: behind globality stands the problem of imperialism. From such a position it follows, in particular, that Soviet aggression in Afghanistan is condemned as an error, not as an act of aggression within the context of a strategic design of worldwide significance and of an imperialist policy.

3. At this point it is necessary to go into a brief reflections on the nature of imperialism, precisely because every individual empirical historical judgment is based on the use of general theoretical categories.

Modern imperialism is undoubtedly tied to capitalism. The latter is based on some intimately interconnected elements: (1) the push of capitalism's economic centers toward first subjugating and toward then gobbling up areas outside the country in a kind of creation of colonies or direct assimilation of territories or the creation of countries that are merely formally independent but that in reality are puppets; (2) this push, which has economic roots, has never remained purely economical, but has always set in motion the government's intervention without which the economic drive cannot by itself accomplish the qualitative jump that is imperialism. Having said this we must also observe that imperialism can have and has had also noneconomical roots.

Imperialism as a matter of fact can also have roots which first of all are ties to the strategic and military requirements of the state, in the manner

of a big power. Now, regardless of whether the imperialist dimension is viewed in terms of primarily economic motivations or whether it is understood in terms of strategic and military motivations, imperialism shapes up as a policy whose ultimate essence is the submission of certain zones and the control of their economy, their policy, and their culture by a state which exercises dominance and thus deprives those zones of their autonomy and sovereignty. The fact that the deprivation of autonomy and sovereignty comes in a more rigid form (direct assimilation) or a less rigid form (creation and maintenance of dependence or puppet states) does not mean that the substance of domination would cease to be imperialist. In this sense we can speak of ancient, modern, and contemporary imperialism, although we must consider and understand the specific differences here. Capitalist imperialism therefore is a specific, historically determined form of imperialism in general; it is not imperialism, pure and simple. It is evident that, if the essence of imperialism is the expropriation of the sovereignty of certain zones by a dominant center, then the fact that this expropriation assumes precapitalist, capitalist, or post-capitalist forms, is secondary when compared to the general nature of imperialism.

4. When the PCI takes its time in protesting that the USSR, being a non-capitalist power, can indeed pursue a big-power policy but not an imperialist policy and that therefore its individual acts of oppression against minor centers are socialist "errors" but not the expression of an imperialist policy, it is using infantile theoretical judgment categories which however are not casual because, on this level likewise, they conceal its inability to grasp the nature of Soviet socialism such as it really is. In using this language, it recognizes the individual elements of the quantity without wishing to recognize the qualitative significance of such a quantity.

I am therefore convinced that the Italian Left and not only the Italian Left--in taking effective action in defense of the struggle of Afghanistan--should come up with its own categories of judgment which would do away with the inadequacy of a prattling theory.

One does not have to be a great theoretician on geopolitics to understand the nature of Soviet strategy toward Afghanistan; this is a strategy which appears obvious only if we examine the country's geographical location, bordering on the USSR, China, Pakistan, and Iran. The USSR certainly did invade Afghanistan because it is driven by a mistaken understanding of its tasks as an internationalist power and it has misinterpreted the duties of providing aid to a backward country which seeks its own way to modernization. Control over a region which gravitates toward the Middle East, Pakistan, and China, which therefore is a strategic key position in the context of current international tensions, sufficiently by itself explains the Soviet move in sufficiently eloquent terms. It is a move which ties in with the entire Soviet policy of penetration at critical points in Western Asia, in Africa, and in Indochina.

5. Having said all this I personally do not think that the debate can be terminated by simply saying that the USSR is also an imperialist power. This, in my opinion, is as necessary as it is insufficient. In the final analysis, the problem resides in the practical conclusions to be drawn. A condemnation in terms of only the "values" of Soviet policy in Afghanistan and elsewhere would wind up leading to an abstract end also if--I want to stress--this theoretical dimension has an essential value in the political debate within the Italian and European Left since it constitutes a necessary prerequisite for its concrete policy.

It seems to me that some crucial points must be identified here:

I. The partisan struggle in Afghanistan must be supported in the sense of the principle of national sovereignty; this is a point of decisive importance for all more or less secondary countries of the world in dealing with the policy of the superpowers;

II. But we cannot overlook the fact that the defense of national sovereignty of the smaller countries is a part of the reality of world politics. Now, this reality rests on the existence of international power centers which correspond to the characteristics of past and present history and which cannot foreseeably have any possibility of being modified;

III. The smaller countries have the possibility of having their sovereignty defended in a better fashion only in a new context of international balances so as to prevent the superpowers from operating undisturbed in the pursuit of their hegemonic objectives;

IV. We are witnessing a crisis of international bipolarism which is being modified as a result of the emergence of China as an atomic power, the re-emergence of Japan, for the time being only in terms of an economic power, the new role of Europe tied above all to the initiative of West Germany and France;

V. If it is true that the crisis of bipolarism is a fact of life, then the thing that is necessary--and this is the decisive point--is to find ways of resolving it, but in a way which would enhance rather than diminish international stability. The resolution in which the Left is interested consists of the constitution of new balances between several international power centers capable of assuring a macroequilibrium of a multipolar type which precisely as such is better able to guarantee also the existence of the smaller countries;

VI. The relationship existing between the possibility of autonomy of the smaller countries in the political field and the economic dimension is clear. Now, there seems to be no doubt that the constitution of a multipolarism of major power centers makes it easier for the smaller countries to have a larger number of options in their effort to get economic support toward their development;

VII. Europe can play a decisive role in the formation of a new pluripolar macroequilibrium side by side with China. But it can play this role all the more effectively, the more strongly and extensively it establishes political and institutional links within itself, links which will permit the transition from economic integration to political and institutional integration, the basis and prerequisite for military autonomy of its own, the latter certainly being an indispensable element. In this sense, the Italian Left must act as an aware and consistently European-oriented force also for reasons of political realism;

VIII. The crisis of bipolarism can be a positive but also a negative fact. If it should grow so as to increase instability throughout the world, rather than reducing it, then two threats would take shape: the explosion of the world or an attempt by the two superpowers to proceed to a new division of the world on the basis of a rigid imposition of force relationships much vaster than the division created after World War II. Such a new division would reduce the possibility of autonomy of the smaller countries to a minimum or to zero. This is why the crisis of the old-type bipolarism must lead to a multipolarism that will not be chaotic but that instead will be stabilizing. A united Europe would have a potentially fruitful role to play along these lines. The obvious danger is that it might lose its race against time--hence the urgency of the undertaking.

I intended to underscore the fact that solidarity with the smaller countries that are threatened by imperialist conflicts cannot be a sector thing and demands a broader strategy because every part of the world is now more than ever before a component of all of the worldwide problems. I therefore departed from the issue of Afghanistan alone and expanded the debate. I hope that this expansion will emerge clearly in terms of its motivations and connections with the specific topic of relations between the Left and Afghanistan.

Barbarous Repression Scored

Rome AVANTI! in Italian 8 Oct 80 p 8

[Article by Mike Barry: "Humiliation and Annihilation--Eyewitness Reports on Barbaric Repression"]

> [Text] For the Afghan people, the Middle Ages extended to the end of 1978. Afghanistan began to get to know the modern world only 2 years ago. But it came to see the most atrocious and barbaric face of that modern world. Thanks to a Pol-Pot-style racist regime, socialism, for the people of Afghanistan, became synonymous with concentration camps. The eyewitness accounts of the victims of repression and the most bestial tortures inflicted by the regime's police are varied and dramatic; the ultimate purpose seems to be the humilitation and the annihilation

of whatever human aspects there are left in any individual. But Afghanistan is anything but isolated. It is to be hoped that its friends and supporters will become ever more numerous and that the socialists all over the world will also be included among them.

'You Prisoners Have No Rights'

They took us to the toilets but they were not real toilets; they were more like "holes in the ground," like those we have in our rural areas. We were forced to stand in line and we were not allowed to delay in taking care of our physiological needs for more than just a couple of minutes. If you were too slow, you were insulted, you were dragged out before getting dressed again and you were then beaten. They told us: "You come back the same way you went." I saw people who refused to stand in line and they were beaten. Then they locked us up again in our cells and 24 hours and sometimes even 48 hours passed before we were allowed to go to the toilet again. There was a soldier outside, more powerful than the other, and his name was Gol Agha. He would often beat the prisoners, taking their money and telling them: "I am a Khalqi. That is the way things have to be in a people's regime! In a people's regime, nobody has the right to speak! No pens or books for political prisoners! A political prisoner cannot move about freely and cannot think or understand! All of you, who are locked up inside there, are traitors!" But it was not just the soldiers who talked like that. Very often, when they happened to be passing by, the commanders also made similar remarks. "You political prisoners have no rights. Keep quiet because you do not have the right to speak! The conditions under which we are keeping you here are entirely adequate! In the other countries, political prisoners are not being treated so nicely. This is a people's regime which has been established once and for all! A communist regime! Thanks to us, this country will become prosperous! We will kill and we will bomb all those who are against us, regardless of what group they belong to!" There camp commander was a certain Saied Abdolla. I heard him say with my own ears: "Only one million Afghans must remain alive! We need only one million communists (literally, 'Khalqi'); the others are no good to us and we will rub them out." This historical saying has already made the round in Afghanistan and deserves to be quoted in the original Persian language. And then he added: "You did not come here to learn something. This is not a hotel where we serve you gourmet foods. You are not here to take a bath, to read books, and to have fun! You are here because you are enemies of the regime. You are here to be interrogated, to be debased to the rank of scum, and to be eliminated."

I did not get permission to take a bath for 2 months. Then they gave me a bucket of ice-cold water to wash up outside, in the middle of the winter. Many prisoners caught pneumonia this way. Those who were stricken with serious diseases, such as appendicitis, were taken to the hospital after several days. But they were not getting much better treatment there; they were not operated upon but they only got aspirins and vitamins. In most

cases, obviously, the seriously ill patients did not recover and many died. It was very rare for a patient to be transferred to an outside hospital to be operated upon. I personally know sick people who died in that "hospital"; three persons who suffered internal bleeding were taken to the hospital only when they were already dying. The others did not have the right to any treatment leading to recovery. "Let them live--if they can--or let them die." The fate of the sick prisoner was a matter of no concern to them. They were afraid that the prisoners might fake being sick in order to be able to recover in the hospital.

Commandant Saied Abdolla was an inhuman tyrant. I have read things about the Nazi and fascist prisons but I believe that the communist prisons are perhaps even worse.

'They Burned Homes, Trees, and the Grain'

The young mother said: "Homes and villages--they destroyed everything. What was left to us we transported on our heads, from our homeland to this point here. My father, my mother, and my brothers died during the Holy War (Jihad). They remain buried there but we do not know exactly where. People fell on the hills, under the trees, and the trees burned. They vomited their fire [napalm] upon the trees and the trees burned. I escaped all the way here. I kept inquiring around but nobody knows anything about my folks. With the help of God we escaped together, dead-tired, exhausted, starved, with just the clothes on our backs--I and the Grey-Haired-Ones (safedmouy, a title of respect given to mature and old women, just as the Afghans give men the title of Greybeards). Our people are all 6 feet under but we escaped at night with the airplanes flying overhead and the tanks behind us."

[Question] From what village do you come, Madam?

[Answer] From Sorkh-Round. We arrived a week ago. We saw the bombing raids. We escaped from the Soviets. They took the young women away and they left only some old women behind. We tried to hide under a tree but they threw gasoline at the tree which caught fire. We ran along the irrigation canals, hiding, and the tank followed us and everything caught fire. We were able to get away at night.

[Question] What had you done against the government in your village?

[Answer] We are religious people. We did nothing! We did nothing againt this government but we were tyrannized!

[Question] What did the soldiers who came to your village destroy?

[Answer] The houses! The grain!

[Answer] (From the oldest woman) The grain! Everything that had been harvested was burned! And they killed our little babies! Then they

dropped gasoline tanks on our fruit trees and all our trees burned down! They dropped gasoline tanks on them and they caught fire. They did not even allow us to bury our dead. We ran and the planes flew overhead and the tanks advanced behind us. "Tat-tat-tat-tat!" The trees were splintered and the houses were wrecked. The children--my boy is dead, those women know it! And they made prisoners! They took the children away! They took the women away! But the men, when they caught them, they would kill them right away!

(The young mother) The Russians stomped them!

[Question] Were they Afghan or Soviet soldiers?

[Answer] Soviets! Soviets! Shuravi!

[Question] Did you see them?

(Both of them together) [Answer] Yeah! Yeah! Soviets!

(The young mother) There were airplanes in the sky and tanks on the ground. The Soviets brought them in. Two widows and two men they took away from my house. They killed the men. They took their wives away and they killed their husbands.

(The oldest woman, now making reference to the incidents that took place initially in the village of Sorkh-Round; (it seems that these were arrests of people presumed to be snipers; the participation of Soviet or Afghan repression personnel in this kind of operation is not clearly indicated) they threw them into their tanks. I said: "I will go and talk to them. I will talk to the mayor (the Afghan word is Oloswal)." I talked to a woman who was with them, a political prisoner; they had all kinds of prisoners but she was young. But they took the two boys away in their tank and then they made them get off and they machinegunned them. They threw them on the ground and they emptied their rifles and submachineguns into their backs.

[Question] Who did that?

[Answer] Soviets, Soviets! At Sorkh-Round. They did not return the dead to us and I spent many a night looking for them.

(The young mother) The Soviets would come every night to take us and kill us. They smashed everything and threw everything on the ground.

(The oldest woman) We are Muslims! We speak the Word; Mohammad is the Prophet of God, Mohammad Rasoul Allah! And those people are tyranizing us! I gave three sons to the Holy War! I came here with the only little girl left to me!

[Question] So you were absolutely unable to stay in your village?

(The mother) [Answer] Absolutely not!

(The oldest woman). They took the women away! They killed the men!

[Question] Are you sure that they took them away? Did you see that with your own eyes?

[Answer] (Both of them together) Yeah! Yeah! With our own eyes!

(The young mother) The Soviets took them away! We escape in order not to suffer the same fate, in order not to be taken prisoner by the Kafers (the infidels). And then there was hunger and thirst! Death! People were made prisoner! People were killed! That is why we escaped!

(The oldest woman) Young women, young men! Their husbands were killed by the airplanes and by the tanks! The women threw themselves into the river in order not to be captured by the Soviets! They all drowned!

(Both together) We saw them with our own eyes.

(The oldest woman) Too much tyranny,too much, too much. They also burned the mosques with gasoline.

(The young mother) It is like petroleum. They dropped it and it catches fire.

[Question] Did they drop it from the airplanes?

(The young mother) [Answer] From both--from airplanes and tanks.

(The oldest woman) They dropped something and everything became dark; we rubbed our eyes with our fingers. They would have taken us away if we had stayed there. Who can remain? There is hunger. There is nothing to eat. The houses have been burned down.

(The young mother) The Hindus of Jalalabad got some bread to us. They dared help us! (Allusion to the Hindu stores in that city; now they praised the support given not only by the Hazara Shiites but also of the tiny Hindu minority of Afghanistan.) But the Russians did not allow a single piece of bread to reach our village from Jalalabad! No salt! No tea. We only had a little bit of corn. We ate it dry. Now it is all gone. And we kept looking at the sky all the time to see whether their airplanes might not be coming over!

(The oldest woman) The old people died. The young ones they took away, to the Soviet Union. The widow you see over there cannot even talk about this because she cries; all of her little children are dead!

(The young mother) They are like the Khalqi. They came to our village, they attacked our faith, and they said: "We need the land of Afghanistan. We do not need Muslims. We will kill them. We will kill them."

"Countryside Without a Sign of Life"

I must tell you a rough story. I am talking here about what happened in Kunar. I am talking about the poor people, about the mujaheddin. But first I want to talk about what happened earlier. The population of Kunar rebelled at first against the government of Taraki (that is almost correct; resistance actually broke out in the autumn of 1978 in Nuristan, in the northern part of Kunar, but numerous inhabitants of Kunar immediately sympathized with the resistance). The people of Kunar have been fighting against Taraki, against Amin, against Babrak, and against the Russians for a year and a half now. We ran into all kinds of obstacles and difficulties. In many places, the government conducted search operations and killed groups of people here and there.

But the Russian government these days--on 26 February in the valley of Kunar--well, they came with tanks, with aircraft, with helicopters, with Migs and all kinds of modern weapons. An entire division of the Russian army. Powerful. They began early in the morning at 0630; first they bombed the countryside, the villages, the hills and the valleys. At that time everybody was still in their homes. They were living their routine lives. They killed everybody, women and children. The bombings did not spare anybody; the young ones, who were able to fight, moving from concealed places, kept fighting. They fired at the tanks and the soldiers of the Red Army. Many were killed on the spot by the Russians but many Russians were also killed. The Russian soldiers entered the houses; they were deposited on the roofs from the helicopters. There were about 200. They entered the villages and they fought in the buildings. The village inhabitants resisted in their homes. Many were killed among the Russians and among us. Also women and children. A terrible scene; I do not know how to describe it. The wounded were all over the place; women and children in tears everywhere.

Our fighting men resisted so long as they had ammunition. Then they started throwing stones and sticks against the tanks. But when they were left with nothing but their bare hands, the entire population of the valley fled. Today, many are looking for their children, their wives, their parents. Everybody has been scattered into the mountains and valleys. All of the people around here were able to escape. Everything those poor people had in their homes has been destroyed. Today they have nothing, no means of support. The bombings which came before the start of the fighting were carried out with all kinds of bombs, bit bombs, rockets, and then there was a bomb which released tremendous heat and everything around it would catch fire. From another bomb would come a stinking smoke. It gave us headaches. A stench that made us choke. A terrible pain in the legs. All of the big towns in Kunar, such as Asmar, Sigal, the little valley of Pandan, they are all in the hands of the Russians.

All of the people who lived in those places went away. Now there is nobody there. It is a countryside of death, without any signs of life; only tanks and trucks with Russian soldiers. I do not know how things are going to end in Afghanistan. I do not know what the fate of the mujaheddin will be. The Russians have no concept of human life. We lost all of our friends, all of those who were dearest to us, we were fighting together, hiding among the rocks. And now--(he hesitated and fell silent).

The people of these valleys were very poor but they had happy lives with their families and their children. Now their lives have been turned upside down and wiped out by the Russian Army. For nothing. They lost everything and now they have no place to go. They have no goals. Their life no longer has any sense. I do not understand the Russians. I do not understand those people. I do not know what they want from Afghanistan. Why are they making life so tough for us? Why are they killing those people who are fighting for their own country, for their own faith, for their own liberty?

Soviet Strategy Outlined

Rome AVANTI! in Italian 8 Oct 80 pp 9-10

[Article by Jiri Pelikan: "Objectives of Soviet Aggression--Strategy Based on Extermination and Terror"]

[Text] I would like to concentrate on an analysis of Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan as a part of current Soviet strategy and draw conclusions regarding the Western Left. I have been asked to do this also on the basis of a comparison between this intervention and the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, bringing out the common points and the differences. I would like to say first of all that historical situations are different and can never be reproduced in a mechanical fashion; I would like to make it clear that, in this sense, there is neither a fatalism, nor the possibility of revision in political life. This comparison however appears all the more useful to me because we are once again facing the case of Poland as it must cope with a very exclusive situation which, once again, confronts the Left and public opinion as well as all democratic forces all over the world with the danger of Soviet military intervention and the dilemma is how to avoid it or, if that should not be possible, how to confront it.

These are three completely different situations: Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. But there is one common question involved here: what is the Soviet strategy toward countries of "real socialism"--in other words, countries within its sphere of influence? The albeit limited study of these cases and above all the study of the first two military interventions in 1968 and 1979-1980 can help us better understand the behavior of the Soviet leadership group and the purposes of its strategy, also because these two cases involve widely differing situations. The USSR intervenes militarily in countries under its hegemony in two cases: when the communist party in power becomes the spokesman for the need for

change and political, economic, and structural reforms, as in the case of the Prague Spring; when the communist party in power is divided or disappears or loses control of the situation as in Hungary in 1956 or in Afghanistan today. There is no doubt that direct military intervention for the Soviet leadership group represents the last instrument suitable in such cases after attempts at regaining control, by the political forces of the national regime loyal to Moscow, have failed. But there is also another important and common aspect: the last two military interventions in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan were carried out against two countries where Soviet troops had not been stationed although they were afterwards introduced "contemporaneously" in order to stay there. This shows that the USSR, or its current leadership group, believes the presence of troops to be the most important and indispensable guarantee for real socialism and, on the contrary, looks with suspicion towards countries which claim to subscribe to socialism but reject that presence, such as Romania and Yugoslavia. As we study the way in which these two interventions were stage-managed, we will find these common points and certain procedures which are repeated.

(1) Both interventions took the form of a surprise operation, a kind of raid, which did not permit any political and military responses. In both cases, the Soviet command used motorized infantry, tanks and transport as well as combat aircraft; in Afghanistan, in addition, they made much more use of military helicopters, a weapon which the Soviet Union developed during the sixties on the basis of the American experience in Vietnam.

(2) In both cases, the minute preparation of the military operation, undertaken in utmost secrecy, was accompanied by the total absence of political preparation for the intervention, both regarding the Soviet Army and the population of the countries to be invaded. In 1968, the Soviet soldiers did not have the slightest idea where they were and why they were there; only later was the threat of a German invasion and a local counter-revolution invented for them. In both cases, the political forces--including those positively oriented toward the USSR--were taken by surprise and were placed on the defensive and the overwhelming majority of the population adopted an attitude hostile toward intervention. At Prague and in Kabul, the USSR isolated itself even more so than during the earlier invasion. Both operations had wiped out almost any possibility of democratizing the country's political leadership and created a situation in which the regime could not exist without the presence of the Red Army.

(3) In both cases, military intervention eliminated the party leaders and brought to power the representatives of the so-called "sound forces" and "the real proletarian internationalists," that is to say, pro-Soviet groups; then they employed the same stage setup: the Soviet troops entered "upon invitation of the communist leaders and the people." But while in Czechoslovakia the names of the leaders, whose supposedly called upon the Soviet Army, were never disclosed and while even today, after 12 years, none of the present leaders, who could give those names, has the courage to admit them in public, Babrak Karmal in Afghanistan, brought to Kabul

with Soviet tanks, confessed to having asked for "brotherly aid," while Amin and Taraki, who had also asked for help, as Brezhnev had said several times, cannot talk--because they are dead, killed by those whom they had asked to help them. But the important thing here is the principle that in any country, where the Soviet Army intervened, they must ready a group that will take power and will assume responsibility for having "asked for brotherly Soviet aid," in other words, legalizing the intervention in international terms in this way.

(4) Another surprising thing is the propagandistic continuity in preparing and justifying the military intervention: there is always talk of concomitance between the existence of the domestic counterrevolution and external interference by imperialism. In the Czechoslovak case, they underscored the role of West Germany and, surprisingly, of Brandt, himself, and the SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany]--obviously in addition to the Americans who always mentioned in this connection--and in the case of Afghanistan they mentioned China.

Domestically speaking, the most dangerous enemy in the case of Czechoslovakia was "the shadow of social-democracy," while in the Afghan case it is "religious fanaticism" and "feudalism."

(5) It is also very important to analyze the application of the so-called "Brezhnev Doctrine" in both cases. In 1968, many Western observers were ready to wait for [as published; accept] the justification for Soviet military intervention and thus the validity of the Brezhnev Doctrine because Czechoslovakia was a member of the Warsaw Pact and was located in a part of Europe considered as the Soviet sphere of influence established at Yalta. I do not now wish to challenge the concept of the division of the world but I want to underscore the error of those observers, an error which was also underscored by Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. For the Soviet leaders, the Brezhnev Doctrine is applicable not only to the countries of the Warsaw Pact, that is to say, the countries of Eastern Europe, but to the entire socialist community, as Brezhnev himself defined it in his speech to the Congress of the PUWP in Warsaw in 1968 and further developed by Andrey Gromyko, in his June 1968 speech to the Supreme Soviet. For the USSR, the socialist community is a very vast phenomenon and includes all countries, both European and non-European, where either the local forces by themselves or with Soviet or Cuban support created a form of power of the Soviet type with a single political monopolist party, with the nationalization of the means of production, with censorship and control over public life, with a state ideology, with the repression of any opposition and a foreign alliance with the USSR, present in the country with military bases. That country thus automatically becomes a part of the worldwide socialist community and is subjected to the same rules with which relations between Moscow and the other countries--already included and consolidated in the block--are conceived. This is why the Brezhnev Doctrine is also valid in those countries and it therefore applies not only to Afghanistan but also to Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Vietnam, etc. It is a good idea to

recall here that the Brezhnev Doctrine should be considered valid by the Soviet leaders also for those Western countries in which--also by democratic means, completely independent of the USSR--left-wing governments might someday come to power, governments which would then attempt structural reforms with a socialist content.

The case of Afghanistan certainly introduces many new aspects. It involved an independent country with a noncommunist regime but subjected to heavy Soviet influence and with very strong economic and military links with the Soviet regime. The case of Czechoslovakia involved ideological heresy, in other words, of revisionism which could contaminate the other countries in the bloc; but that danger did not exist in the Afghan case. Nor does this apply to the Islamic revolution which certain Western observers consider dangerous to the Muslims in the Soviet republics. Afghanistan did not even involve the defense of the zone established at Yalta or a danger of German revanchism. All of this leads us to the conclusion that the case of Afghanistan involves a new phase in USSR global strategy, an expression of its expansionism toward new spheres of influence for the purpose of arriving at a new partition of Asia and the Middle East which will be more favorable to it. The permanent stay of the Soviet forces and the construction of airports and bases indicates the Soviet desire to use the positions gained in Afghanistan as a point of departure toward other countries in that region, especially Iran and Pakistan, toward the warm water of the Indian Ocean and the richest petroleum wells. With this operation, the Soviet marshals intend to attain a triple goal: bases for the Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean, closer access to, if not absolute control over the oil wells, which the USSR needs in order to hold together its future production which within 15 years will not be sufficient to meet its own energy needs and those of its allies, and at the same time to influence Western Europe in this fashion which to a great extent depends on petroleum supplies from that region.

Only the future will correctly answer these assumptions for us. Perhaps the next several days will tell us how Soviet strategy seeks to exploit the conflict between Iraq and Iran. I am personally convinced that the Soviet leadership will try to get the utmost advantage out of this for itself and will then prove to be inclined toward negotiations either with the United States or with Western Europe. They will try a new Yalta, this time for the Middle East and Asia. In this context, Afghanistan could be sacrificed by the Western powers to maintain access--even controlled and unlimited--to petroleum.

My idea as expressed here also would explain the passivity and indifference of the Western countries in the case of Afghanistan. After a big flood of words of condemnation, after a proposal to the European Community regarding the neutralization of Afghanistan, a proposal never cleared up and never seriously negotiated either with the Soviets or the Islamic countries, there has been nothing but profound silence. And this is only natural; why should those countries and governments defend the right of a people who is the victim of foreign invasion and Soviet hegemonism when they did

not do anything in many other cases, especially since those same governments in the past promoted the same policy of repression and hegemonism toward many other of the weakest nations? We can only be astonished that a portion of the Left with by no means little influence granted credibility to actions such as those of French President Giscard who went to Warsaw to meet Brezhnev to cover a maneuver involving changes in Soviet divisions, saying that this was a correct step in the right direction, in other words, that one must believe Brezhnev's intention to withdraw troops from Afghanistan if foreign influence should cease and to expand the regime of Karmal toward nationalist and religious elements. How can one believe such an assumption when Soviet military intervention itself and the country's occupation destroyed almost any possibility of national reconcilliation and blocked the political situation, as is also confirmed by the example of Czechoslovakia 12 years after invasion?

And how can one expect a political solution of which there is so much talk, both in the government and among the left, through negotiations only with the Soviet Union? It is a shame that the Italian and Western press did not give more room to the statements made by Soviet Ambassador to Paris, Stepan Chervonenko who has a unique experience behind him; was he not the man who prepared Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia and who then also guided narmalization in 1969-1971? Mr Chervonenko said in Paris on 20 May 1980, addressing the French diplomatic press association that the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan would be a gift to the United States would mean a guarantee against foreign intervention in internal affairs! Since the USSR has no intention of giving the United States any gifts, it is therefore logical that the Soviet forces should remain in Afghanistan because they protect it and all those who oppose their presence threaten Afghanistan and therefore are aggressors. It is not a coincidence that the accord on Soviet presence in Afghanistan, signed in Moscow on 10 March, employs the same phrases as the Moscow dictate of 1968 through which a temporary presence of Soviet troops was imposed on Czechoslovakia, a presence which then was transformed into a permenent presence. Mr Chervonenko invites the West to recognize the existing realities, and realistic politics is now the biggest Soviet argument at a moment when ideological arguments have disappeared, arguments in which the Soviet leaders no longer believed, just like the political solution. This means the recognition of the Karmal regime, the closing of the frontiers, and permission for the Soviet forces to stifle resistance with blood and hunger. The Left, which has always defended the principle of self-determination of peoples and which had made common cause with national liberation wars, cannot accept such a "political solution" which also signifies the recognition of the USSR militarily to intervene in its sphere of influence against a commitment on the Soviet side to allow the United States and the West to have a free hand against any attempt at changing the political status quo in the other part of the world.

This is why we consider it necessary for the Left to adopt an initiative of its own and not to confine itself to pressuring only the governments or to criticize their behavior. We saw during the war in Algeria and later

in Vietnam that the Left was able to mobilize public opinion through big united demonstrations, meetings, strikes, sit-ins in schools, fund-raising, medications and food, dispatch of delegations, etc., and we saw how this helped step up pressure both upon the French government and then upon the American government to withdraw their troops from those countries. An essential component in this battle was the armed resistance of the Algerian and the Vietnamese peoples without which peace could not have been achieved. This is true also in the case of Afghanistan. This was confirmed by the newspaper LE MONDE on 15 May 1980 when it wrote that the only possibility of getting the Soviet leaders to change their decision to remain in Afghanistan and to withdraw resides "in the capacity of the Afghans to resist the Soviets" and "in the determination of the Westerners to supply them with the means." We know today that this desire on the part of the West does not exist, in spite of the fact that the West is furnishing large quantities of weapons to various dictatorial regimes throughout the world; but there is an Afghan resistance which in this situation can put solidarity and the alliance of all left-wing forces to the test. It must be the duty of the Left to promote political, moral, and also material solidarity with the Afghan resistance. This is quite apart from the influence which the Left can exert on certain Western governments and on the European Community. The Left has its own instruments of pressure upon the USSR through its channels and contacts with the CPSU. A special role falls to the PCI as the strongest communist party in the West and as a partner of the CPSU. We must here pay tribute to everything positive which the PCI and the Spanish Communist Party have already done to oppose Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. But we must also discuss together what more we can do. For example, an appeal or an open letter from the PCI to the CPSU to stop the intervention and to withdraw the troops from Afghanistan could have a much greater effect than any diplomatic move by any Western government. Instead, there is no reference to Afghanistan in the joint announcements released by the representatives of the PCI and the CPSU and in his latest speech, Enrico Berlinguer, as Bettino Craxi recalled recently, there was no such reference either, in spite of the fact that he came out with a long list of peoples who have been victims and protagonists this year.

In talking about Afghanistan, we are not turning away from the other dramatic situations at this time, such as those of the Cambodian, Eritrean, Kurd, Palestinian, Bolivian, Chilean, as well as the people of South Korea, the homicidal atomic arms race, the economic crisis, the struggle for civil rights in the countries of real socialism and in countries with military and fascist dictatorships, which still come up here and there. The struggle of the Afghan people against Soviet occupation is a part of that universal battle which the Western Left is also fighting. We have the very special great responsibility of not leaving the initiative of supporting the struggle of the Afghan people--as the struggle of the Polish workers--to the forces of the Right. Afghanistan today is a test of strength for the Left, as Spain was in 1936 and Vietnam during the sixties. If we do not stop the hand of the aggressor in Afghanistan and if we do not show that the Left is with the Afghan people, a victim of foreign invasion, then we may in the future, perhaps in the not too distant future, be confronted with even more

dramatic acts of aggression which then can no longer be stopped with demonstrations and political solidarity actions. We all know that the next intervention, for example, in Poland, would be a deadly blow not only to the socialist idea but also to peace in Europe and throughout the world. Our solidarity with the Afghan resistance becomes a commitment which must exorcise this terrible peril.

Liberation Movement Described

Rome AVANTI! in Italian 8 Oct 80 pp 9, 10

[Article by Mohammed Habib: "Afghan People's Resistance to Invader--Authentic National Liberation Movement"]

[Text] While, on the one hand, a large segment of Western public opinion condemns our country's invasion on 27 December by an expeditionary corps of 100,000 men, it seems on the other hand often to have difficulty in exactly grasping the characteristics of the forces that face each other in Afghanistan. Some people espousing the theory of the Soviet invaders, maintain that the events of April 1978 lined up one revolutionary party against another, the PDP, the promoter of democratic reforms, and obscurantist forces hostile to change. This thesis would have us believe that Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation springs above all from feudal forces, manipulated moreover by the American CIA.

But the facts of life are quite different and the nature of Afghan resistance, with its multiplicity and its mass character, cannot be understood independently of the circumstances under which it arose.

To be sure, on the eve of the April 1978 coup d'etat, popular discontent accumulating against the monarchic regime and against that of Prince Daud --both of whom by the way were supported and armed by the USSR--was very strong. The ruling classes exploited and oppressed the popular masses. The people were angry over the lack of care and over the corruption among the leaders and the people were therefore ready to receive a reform policy favorably. Nevertheless, the 1978 coup d'etat, fomented to put in power, with active Soviet participation, the Kalq Party--made up of a small group of intellectuals without any contact with the people--did not meet with popular support. Why? To answer that question, we must go back in time.

In 1953, the king's cousin, General Daud, took over as head of government. He asked the United States to supply him with weapons but the strengthening of bonds with American imperialism ran into an obstacle: there was a big territorial dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the latter being a member of CENTO under American sponsorship. Unable to come to an agreement with the United States, Daud turned to the Soviet Union for military aid. This is why Afghanistan since the middle of the fifties has constituted a gap in the American military deployment in Asia.

In return for infrastructure projects and particularly the construction of highways and airports as well as military aid, the USSR imposed a real

grab of resources upon Afghanistan (natural gas, minerals, agricultural production).

After the invasion of last December, the exploitation of Afghanistan's natural resources was stepped up very considerably. According to a report by the TASS [Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union], dated 2 April 1980, Afghanistan this year must export to the USSR 2.5 billion cubic meters of natural gas, that is, 16 percent more than in 1979. The purchasing price was not indicated.

Starting with the first 5-year plan of 1956, Soviet "aid" thus became more important than American aid ($150.3 million as against $82 million). As in many other countries of the Third World, Soviet "aid" in Afghanistan encouraged the creation of a state capitalism sector which serves as bridgehead for Soviet penetration.

At the beginning of the seventies, there appeared two contradictory but interconnected movements. On the one hand, the USSR, involved in growing rivalry with American imperialism entered an offensive phase in its international policy. After the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the events in East Pakistan in 1971 were highly revealing for the peoples of the region. With its traditional structure and its policy of nonalignment, Afghanistan--in spite of Soviet economic domination--was no longer in line with the ambitions of the new policy of the USSR in the region. On the other hand, we saw a strengthening of the pro-Western faction within the regime which tried to get closer to the Shah of Persia and to achieve a reconciliation with Pakistan. The result was the first pro-Soviet coup d'etat of 1973 which put Daud in power; he was the former prime minister and the architect of the rapprochement, with the USSR and the "Parcham" Party which was in the pay of the USSR and which is currently in power.

During the Daud regime, the USSR strengthened its rule over Afghanistan. Trade with the USSR accounted for 80 percent of the foreign trade volume and more than half of the industrial sector was controlled by the USSR. But although Daud further opened the country to the USSR in the economic and military sectors, he still refused to aline himself purely and simply with the expansionist views of the USSR in the region. Daud's reconciliation with Pakistan promoted the policy of the USSR in dealing with the separatist movements in Pakistan, in the Northwest Province, and above all in Baluchistan and for an outlet into the Indian Ocean. The renewed strengthening of the pro-Western faction of the regime starting in 1977 and the exclusion of the pro-Soviet "Parcham" Party from the government among other things persuaded the USSR to organize the sinister and bloody coup d'etat of 27 April 1978.

Following this coup d'etat, the USSR installed the dictatorial and anti-popular puppet regime of Taraki-Karmal-Amin in order further to facilitate its control over Afghanistan. Under the cover of economic reforms, this regime launched a policy aimed at destroying the social and cultural structures of the Afghan people and smashing any attempts at national resistance against USSR rule.

I will not come back here to the brutal and ferocious repression to which the Afghan people has been subjected and the means of destruction used by the Soviets starting in April 1978. Afghan fellow citizens and foreign friends have testified to these crimes. I will only say that among the hundreds of thousands of martyrs, the best sons of our country, true revolutionaries who spent a large part of their lives in the prisons of King Zahir Shah, and then in those of Prince Daud, also included the patriots killed by Taraki after having been tortured by Soviet advisers.

These were the facts of life even before the open invasion by the USSR in December 1979 which made it even clearer in the eyes of our people that the regime's policy is also a policy of subservience to the foreigner, in this particular case, to the Soviet Union.

Thus, the local and often spontaneous resistance, which kept springing up in Afghanistan for the past 2 years in this part of the front in response to the arbitrary actions and fascist brutality of the regime, without any need for any orders coming from parties installed in Pakistan, went hand in hand with the development of the determination for national resistance against foreign rule, a determination which took hold among all population strata.

This desire for independence does not go back just to the entry of the Soviet troops into Afghanistan. Afghanistan--which was and remains one of the world's poorest countries--like all of the countries of the Third World--found itself facing the exploitation and domination maneuvers of imperialism and the big powers. In the past, the ruling classes had always served foreign interests and had often repressed and exploited the people. There is therefore nothing extraordinary if, within the current Afghan resistance, we find forces that already fought against the reactionary regimes of King Zahir Shah and Prince Daud. This is true for example of numerous revolutionary organizations that sprang from a grand movement of Marxist-Leninist inspiration, such as the "Eternal Flame," founded during the early sixties. This is also true of numerous democratic, nationalist, and progressive organizations, such as "Melat," "Afghan Melat," "Setami-Mili," etc., or Islamic political organizations such as "Hezbi-islami," "Jamati-islami," or the Movement of Shiite Militant Muslims.

One of these revolutionary organizations that sprang from the "Eternal Flame," the "Revolutionary Group of the Peoples of Afghanistan," is also a member of a united Islamic Front, "the Front of Nujahed Fighters" of Afghanistan founded in 1979 and made up of numerous progressive Islamic organizations. It is this front which is behind the revolt of the officers and soldiers of the garrison at Bala-Hesar in August in 1979 in Kabul, known for their progressive views. For the Front of Fighting Men, as indicated in Article 2 of their political platform, the fundamental objective of the resistance is to put an end to the rule of the Soviets and all forms of imperialism on the military, political, economic, and cultural level and to work toward the founding of an Islamic Afghanistan independent of the superpowers.

The Front's political program especially emphasizes equality among national and religious minorities, equal rights for men and women, and the struggle against feudalism and any other form of exploitation in the rural areas.

Among the fronts active internally, the two most important ones are: the Front of Nuristan and the Front of Hazaradjat.

The Front of Nuristan, in the country's northeast, is the first armed front of the Afghan resistance. In October 1978, the fighting men of Nuristan, under the leadership of their commander-in-chief Mohammed Anwar Amin, completely liberated Nuristan.

The Front of Hazaradjat is in a rather special situation. It consists of a large portion of members of the Hazarat minority, traditionally one of the most oppressed of Afghanistan. The region involved is in the center of the country and is quite far away from Pakistan and Iran. Hazaradjat is subjected to economic blockade and is surrounded by the Soviet troops who try to strangle it and reduce it by means of starvation. Some reports coming from Afghanistan indicate that the Hazarat fighting men managed to break out of the encirclement at several points, especially at Bamiyan and Gazni, but the threat still persists.

The armed and popular struggle began in the spring of 1979 in the country's south at Behssud and in the north at Yakalang. After 10 months of fighting, the Hazarats liberated 34 districts and two provincial capitals with a population of 3 million inhabitants and they have more than 70,000 fighting men. In the north of Hazaradjat they established contact with the Uzbek and Turkoman fighters; in the east they made contact with the Tagiki fighters and in the south, at Wardak and Gazni, with the Pacham fighters.

In September 1979, the various Hazarat groups got together and founded the "Revolutionary Council of Islamic Unity." The objective of the Hazarat Front, as explained by Nasseri, one of the Hazarat leaders, is "to overthrow the puppet government in the pay of the Soviet Union and to create a real Islamic government in which independence, liberty, and social justice will be guaranteed to all peoples of Afghanistan."

The fronts of Hazaradjat and Nuristan, like many other fronts at home, do not depend on any party or political organization and are military, political fronts with their administrations in the liberated zones.

We must also mention the "United National Front" which consists of revolutionary and nationalist organizations and which is particularly active in Kabul and north of Kabul. It is known that one of the leaders of that front, Majid Kalakany, a great revolutionary and popular man, was sentenced to death by the authorities in Kabul in June 1980.

The reference to Islam has a profound meaning for the Afghan national resistance. To get the proper idea of the role and importance of Islam, the religion of 99 percent of the Afghan population, one must take the following three elements into consideration.

1. Islam is profoundly rooted among the people. To a great extent, the culture and popular traditions of the Afghan people are many thousands of years old and are influenced by Islam. Islam has been and remains the factor of identity and unity of the Afghan people amid its diversity.

2. Ever since it came to Afghanistan, Islam always played a mobilizing role in resistance against foreign invaders. During the 19th century, during the three wars of independence against the English, religious personalities, such as the Mullah Moshk Alam, played a decisive role in mobilizing the people and leading them to victory. The British colonialists tried to use Islam to divide the people. But the religious leaders, who collaborated with the enemy of the people and the fatherland, were rejected by the people who called them "Mlahi Kazeb" (phony clergymen).

3. Islam played an important role in the fight against oppression and exploitation by the ruling classes. Today, once again, in a big national war for independence and liberty, progressive and militant Islam symbolizes and leads the struggle of the people.

It must be emphasized that, in their presentation of the facts, the Western media often fail to cover aspects of Afghan national resistance which are fundamental, such as the fact that it is rooted inside the country, as well as its largely popular and anti imperialist character.

The political program and the documents prepared by the various parties and organizations of the resistance indicate that the Afghan people rejects not only Soviet rule but any other imperialist rule, no matter from where it may come. This explains the hostility of the resistance to the "neutralization" of Afghanistan proposed by Western European countries. This plan as a matter of fact provides for giving Afghanistan the status of a neutral and nonalined country although Afghanistan was one of the countries that helped found the nonalined movement and in that capacity attended the Bandung Conference in 1955. The European "neutralization" plan would tend toward the creation of a regime which would maintain Soviet influence and domination in Afghanistan but, in return, the USSR would have to give assurance not to create any further threat to Western interests in the region.

As for the Karmal-Brezhnev plan, it calls for a "neutralization" of Afghanistan, guaranteed by the USSR and the United States. This plan has but one objective: to legalize the regime of Karmal, a regime which not only does not respond to the aspirations of the people but which does not even have any real existence. Any attempt in that direction will run counter to the rights of the Afghan people to fashion its own destiny and will encourage USSR intervention and aggression in our region and in the world.

Right now, the situation is still characterized by the intensity of fighting and by the broad range of means of destruction employed by the Soviet troops.

In the beginning of September, the Soviets launched a big offensive in the Panjchir Valley, about 100 kilometers north of Kabul, employing a big force. Their objective was to occupy this valley which is a bastion of the resistance and which is of vital importance to the resistance inside the country. The valley of Panjchir, several scores of kilometers long, rising to an altitude of more than 5,000 meters (the Hindukush massive) is close to the strategic road linking Kabul to the Soviet frontier and permits contact between the fighting men of Hazaradjat, in the center, and the fighters of Badakshan, in the north, close to the Soviet border, as well as those of free Nuristan, in the east of the country, close to the Pakistani border. The Soviet occupation of Panjchir would worsen the situation of the fighting men inside the country this winter.

Afghan resistance today more than ever before needs the political support of the free peoples. If the fighting men in the regions of the north and the south are not resupplied with food and medication before the winter, they will be facing an extremely difficult situation.

All democratic forces which are aware of the drama of the Afghan people and which support the right of the oppressed people to determine their destiny must understand that the only decisive force, which can drive the invaders from Afghanistan, is the Afghan resistance. The political and organizational unity of the resistance undoubtedly has not yet been achieved and the forces constituting it do not always have clear and well-defined programs. Some of them do not have a very firm position toward certain imperialist countries or regarding the former reactionary regime. But that should not make us forget that the active forces which resist Soviet invasion are real and proper anti-imperialist and progressive forces and that unity among the political forces and the military fronts as well as solidarity among the various nationalities and tribes throughout the country did develop authoritatively.

The Afghan resistance has the character of an authentic national liberation movement. With the courage and their sacrifice for the just and noble cause of the liberation of the country, the Afghan patriots are making a great contribution to the cause of justice and peace all over the world. This is why we are asking all anti-imperialist, democratic, and progressive forces that love peace and justice not to remain silent in the face of the genocide of the Afghan people.

We hope that the European democratic forces and especially the participants in this conference will actively contribute to the creation of solidarity committees capable of furnishing the Afghan resistance the political and material support which it needs.

At the cost of the blood of its 17 million inhabitants, our people will fight until victory and will not allow itself to be reduced to slavery.

I repeat the slogan of the Mudjahed fighting men's front:

"Neither American imperialism, nor Russian imperialism, nor any imperialism of any other foreign powers! For an independent, free, and modern Afghanistan."

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PAKISTAN ATTITUDE TO AFGHAN REBELS EXAMINED

Brussels SPECIAL L'EVENTAIL in French 17-23 Oct 80 pp 20-25

[Article by Ivan Denes: "The Afghan People Against the Soviets; On the Subject of Reports on Afghanistan"]

[Text] The events which have shaken up the very foundations of real socialism in Poland since July and which have triggered a process which could in no case be considered as completed threatened to divert the attention of the free world from the ever greater tragedy experienced by the Afghan people. Yet, shunting aside Afghanistan as a political problem would be a fatal error: That country remains the first geographic area outside the empire defined in Yalta in which the Soviet army is directly involved in a military confrontation which has already lasted over 10 months and which has not brought it a decisive victory!

On the other hand, the influx of refugees into Pakistan, fleeing the Soviet military machine in Afghanistan, has increased rather than abated. The rigors of the eminent winter in the high mountains would not make survival any easier than the horrible heat of last summer during which in the camps surrounding Peshawar alone hundreds of children died for lack of water...

It is for this reason that reports on Afghanistan aimed at the free world are of decisive importance, bearing in mind the notoriously misleading information policy of the Soviets and of the vassal Babrak Karmal regime in Kaboul. The Afghan mudjahidins--a term constantly mistranslated as "fighters for freedom" even though a mudjahidin is a fighter for "Jihad" or holy war for the prophet, can rely only on the spontaneity, the love of danger and the courage of a few Western journalists for their disinterested and far from adequately supported struggle to have the publicity so deserved.

Consequently, the purpose of the present article is not to report on the fights in Afghanistan but to present the exclusive tale of an eye witness on reporting possibilities, written by Ivan Denes for Voxmundi.

In its Urdu broadcasts, Radio Moscow frequently attacks the "center of international espionage" in Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's 'Northwest Frontier Province." Even the Khyber Intercontinental Hotel is frequently mentioned in Moscow's broadcasts.

Today the Khyber International, an old tourist hotel, has a rather neglected and dilapidated air: Ever since Prime Minister Daoud was overthrown and assassinated in Kaboul by the pro-Soviet Nur Taraki and that in Afghanistan only 80 kilometers away, the situation resembles a civil war, including the initial massive exodus toward Pakistan, the flow of tourists in the direction of Peshawar has virtually dried out. Conversely, the entry of the Red Army into Afghanistan, at Christmas in 1979, has filled the Khyber Intercontinental with a swarm of constantly rotating foreign journalists. There are at least three reasons for this:

- The other hotels in the city are unacceptable to travelers accustomed to Western comfort;

- All important Afghan resistance organizations have their headquarters--official or clandestine--in Peshawar. The leaders of the Islamic fanatics, the monarchists, the liberals and even the Maoists have settled there, protected by the ferocious-looking and heavily-armed troops. This is one of the reasons for the displeasure of the city's population, for the Pakistanis, who have an obsession for weapons, have been deprived of the right to own or bear arms inside the city, whereas the mudjahidins, with their Kalashnikovs and their Lee Enfields freely move around in their rack-equipped trucks;

- Over a distance of several hundred kilometers, from the Province of Chitral in the north--which, so far, has been largely spared by the fighting--to Katawaz in the south, the Afghan border could be crossed, clandestinely, naturally, only by starting from Peshawar, for it would be inconceivable to cross the border without the active help of one of the resistance organizations which have their headquarters precisely in Peshawar.

Resistance organizations or Afghan political parties frequently hold press conferences in the lobby of the conference rooms of the Khyber International, in the course of which relations among parties and organizations and the formation of cabals and the ever present machinations are far more frequently discussed than specific military actions.

Information which, in fact, originates in Peshawar is frequently datelined New Delhi, out of consideration for the touchiness and fears of the Pakistani authorities, and are purported to have been provided by "travelers" or "generally well-informed diplomats in the Indian capital;" news, however, is also spread through "leaks" and information deliberately disseminated by the Pakistani secret services and, partially, probably also thanks to "confidential behind-the-scene talks" between journalists and the leaders or press officers of the resistance organizations who, in turn, receive their information by courriers arriving daily or, occasionally, even hourly from the theater of operations. However, considering the fact that within Afghanistan the couriers can reach the border only by foot, information on the various military activities frequently reaches Peshawar several weeks late.

It is obvious that such conversations could not be considered "confidential." The Afghan resistance organizations have been extensively penetrated by the Pakistani secret services. This could not have been difficult, considering the overlapping of families, lines of descendants and tribes typical of the border area. It is no great secret that the entire personnel of the Khyber Intercontinental is ruled by the secret services: returning from Afghanistan, covered in dust, wearing a wide turban, dressed in Pakistani clothes, unshaven and exhausted and, driven by the torrid heat one enters shakily the presently air-conditioned front hall of the hotel, the doorman asks most naturally, "What news do you bring, sir, from thereover?" Later on, in the elevator, the elevator operator would offer a hashish cigarette to the exhausted reporter with the same candor and spontaneity.

The rest is picked up by concealed microphones. In all likelihood, they are not disconnected even when a practicing Muslim pays a visit to a Western journalist in his room to have a drink of whiskey or a beer and freely criticize the Soviet invasion of a neighboring country, when he speaks out against the Afghan refugees compared to a swarm of locusts who have triggered a dizzying spiral in food prices and rentals, against smuggling and the drug traffic which no amount of fighting could hinder, against censorship or against the dictatorial measures adopted by Pakistan's President Zia-ul-Haq.

In Pakistan the population and the bureaucracy are opposing ever more openly any aid to Afghanistan except, naturally, for anything from which they could profit from Western aid. Zia-ul-Haq and the army cadres are the only one to realize that should Afghan resistance crumble it would be the turn of Pakistan with its fragile structure as a state, whatever the method used may be: open attack, intervention following a "request for help," or subversion.

In general, the Pakistani authorities maintain an ambiguous attitude on the Afghan question. As an Islamic country, naturally, Pakistan is on the side of the resistance. However, the fear of the Soviets, the Indians, and left wing subversion is deeply rooted in the minds of the authorities. It is above all the fear of leftist subversion that makes them give a hard time to the Afghans. They are well aware of the fact that a high percentage of goods unloaded for the Afghans at the port of Karachi or at an airport, whether aid to refugees or shipments of weapons for the resistance, consists of stolen merchandise which will be sold on the black market. In the marketplace of Jalalabad, the Afghan provincial capital, one may find powdered milk and soybean flour which Western governments and aid organizations had shipped to Pakistani refugees. There even is an organization which buys Moskovskaya vodka in Europe which it then resells to the Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan. The classical smuggling route through the Khyber Pass remains open and is used for absolutely incredible ventures. At the Peshawar Market one could, surreptitiously, naturally, look over Kalashnikovs with Arabic lettering, coming from Egypt.

Because of the fear of such dark and uncontrollable channels--they could, indeed, easily lead to left wing clandestine organizations--arms shipments are handled very cautiously as the Pakistanis try to restrict them.

As to reports, the Pakistani attitude is equally ambiguous. They obviously know that whenever a Western journalist requests a visa, listing his profession and his desire to visit Peshawar as well, it means that he would like to cross into Afghanistan.

To reach Afghanistan, he must begin by crossing what is known as the "tribal territories." This is a frontier area between 20 and 100 kilometers wide, where there is no law and where the Pakistani police no longer controls or handles. A written permit issued by the Pakistani authorities is necessary in order to be allowed to pass through the numerous police, militia or army control posts, before reaching the "tribal territories." In principle, in order to obtain such an authorization one must apply to the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad, the capital. Sometimes, however, it could also be acquired in Peshawar, providing, actually, to have shown one's "gratitude" in accordance with oriental customs.

Western journalists are very rarely issued such documents, after a great deal of effort, for it is assumed that they use the "tribal territories" only as a trampoline for entering Afghanistan, avoiding or deceiving the last frontier army posts. The scenario is always the same should one express the wish to visit Parachinar or Maram Schah, which are cities close to the border and where the various resistance organizations have their advanced basis! The journalist would ask to visit refugee camps and the authorities would suggest to him dozens of refugee camps outside the "tribal territories." Nevertheless, should the journalist succeed in obtaining a permit, he would be escorted by an official who would "accompany" him and whose traveling and living expenses he must pay. Before being able to cross the border with the mudjahidins, disguised as a mudjahidin himself, he must "shed" this official, either with fantastic adventures or at a price.

The purpose of such strict control is not only to safeguard the appearances of Pakistan's "noninterference" but also to see to it that nothing happens to the Western journalists. Otherwise, the attention of the entire international press would be drawn to the situation which prevails in that country, rather doubtful from the viewpoint of international law.

The guides assigned by the resistance organizations to accompany the journalists in their travels in the Afghan mountains also receive very strict instructions on how to look after the journalists and keep they away from fights. Thus, some colleagues follow their guide in the mountains for weeks without hearing a single shot. This was recently the case with a correspondent of the London SUNDAY TIMES who then had the gall to write in his newspaper that the fights were the pure invention of the journalists, that there was no more fighting in Afghanistan and that the resistance was limited to a "minor rural guerrilla."

I personally saw in Pahtia Province, near Katzkai Village, the destruction of two tanks followed by a violent Soviet helicopter attack. To accomplish this, however, I first had to convince my guide, Engineer Mirwais Wardak, 26, to take me to a real fighting area.

Occasionally, some journalists would use doubtful methods. Thus, a colleague writing for the local newspaper KHYBER MAIL reports having witnessed the following

scene: In the summer, a crew of one of the three big American television networks had shown up in Peshawar with the intention of making a film in Afghanistan. The same day, for the first time, the Telex transmitted information on the new strategic road built by the Soviets from the northern frontier to the Iranian border, passing by Kabul and Herat. Following this, the crew looked for a road under construction in the Pakistani mountains and staged the entire catchingly entitled, "Afghans Reduced to Slavery for Building a Strategic Road." Actually, between Peshawar and Herat there is at least 1,000 kilometers of hard and difficult to cross mountain paths, not to speak of the mortal danger....

Mirwais Wardak described to me his own experiences as well: A group of French journalists had combed the mountains with a fine-toothed comb without seeing any military action. They then managed to talk a malakh--in addition to verbal arguments one could easily imagine the type of other arguments used--to mount an attack against an armored Soviet patrol (the malakhs, the heads of families, are the true leaders of the Afghan resistance. They are the local commanders and the strength or weakness of a resistance organization or of a party depends on the number of malakhs which the head of the organization would succeed in winning over throughout the country). Some 200 mudjahidins took part in the attack and 14 were killed. The journalists were thus able to film, photograph and write. Yet, is this still journalism?

The most authentic and the most honest information center in Peshawar is at the bar of the Khyber Intercontinental: Muslims are not admitted; night after night, the journalists are among their own. Experiences and news are exchanged with unaccustomed frankness in contrast with the situation at other meeting places. When someone returns from "there," in general after days of walking and unbearable thirst, it is here that he will have his first bottle of beer and will start talking....

In that bar I saw one of the new Kalashnikov high-velocity bullets--the first to have been found, which Soviet paratroopers have begun to use in the Kunar Valley. A Japanese press photographer had brought it. It was there also that I saw for the first time fragments of a bomb shaped as a plastic toy which the Soviets cast on villages and roads. It was brought by the correspondent of a noted Swedish conservative newspaper.

The fact is that despite all the difficulties and the circuitous methods used by some colleagues, the feeling which prevails here is that of a common duty. An entire people has risen against foreign occupation and domination and it is our duty to make the world pay attention to the fate of these people and to see to it that this awareness is kept alive.

Solidarity and esprit de corps still remain among some Western journalists.

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BRITISH-ALGERIAN RELATIONS ANALYZED ON OCCASION OF QUEEN'S VISIT

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 24-25 Oct 80 p 1

[Article: "British-Algerian Relations: A New and Fruitful Development"]

[Text] Algiers (APS) -- Queen Elizabeth II of England will be making an official visit to Algeria starting from today. Although she reigns without exercising any governmental power, her official visits take on a political character and bear witness to the importance Great Britain places on its relations with the countries which are visited.

The journey Elizabeth II is currently making in the Maghreb countries is following up her tour in the Mashraq (more particularly in the Gulf countries) in 1979. That shows the importance the Arab world is taking on for Great Britain. This revival of interest dates from the accession to power of the conservatives and Mrs Thatcher, an accession marked by the return of Great Britain to world affairs which had been somewhat neglected by the Labor government.

Mrs Thatcher has apparently set herself the task of stepping back into the international arena and reaffirming the traditionally important role played by Great Britain in the world.

In this regard, Algeria takes on particular importance: its role in the Third World and in the non-aligned movement, its independent policy, and its political and economic stability make it a sought-after and highly regarded partner and spokesman. The talks the Algerian minister of foreign affairs had at the time of his official visit to London last June are proof of this since very wide-ranging exchanges of views on the whole fabric of international problems took place on that occasion between the head of the Algerian diplomatic service and his British counterpart Lord Carrington.

The dialogue instituted at the political level can only give rise to a strengthening of bilateral relations at all levels, especially in the economic and cultural areas.

In the economic area, especially trade, Great Britain is Algeria's sixth-ranking partner with a overall trade volume of 115 billion centimes [as published] (after the United States, the FRG, France, Italy and Spain).

For nearly a year now these relations have been conditioned by the stay in Algiers of the British deputy minister for trade Mr Parkinson in February 1979, besides the visit of the Algerian foreign affairs minister to London, and as well by a mutual desire to improve these relations qualitatively as much as quantitatively.

In this regard the British economy harbors a certain interest in the sizeable Algerian market whose growth is affirmed by the projections of the Five-Year Plan. Some of the signs, among so many others, of this British interest are Mr Parkinson's visit and the establishment within the COMET (Committee for Middle East Trade: Organization for economic cooperation with the Middle East) of an Algerian sub-committee tasked with promoting commercial exchanges with Algeria.

Looking at it from another angle, Great Britain, by virtue of its status as an economic power of a high order, is responding to the desire of Algeria to keep diversifying its foreign trade further, particularly in purchases of durable goods and in the acquisition of technologies necessary to its development.

It should be noted that out of the concern to give concrete form to this mutual desire COMET is organizing for next November in London a seminar bringing together economic-commercial officials of both countries as well as representatives of the major British industrial concerns.

In the cultural area relations between the two countries, taking them at their current level, are felt to be insufficient compared to the existing potential. As an indication let us mention that in the year 1979-1980 some 1,312 students and trainees, for the most part post-graduate students, were being trained in Great Britain. Since a cultural agreement between the two countries is in the process of being negotiated, it is more than likely that the desire to see the volume and level of cultural exchange grow will take concrete form. With the visit of the queen of England, the relations between Algeria and England, which go back a long time as the treaties signed in the 17th and 18th centuries are evidence, will see a new and fruitful development. As a symbol of continuity in government-to-government relations, Her Majesty the Queen will in the course of her stay be presenting President Chadli Bendjedid facsimiles of treaties the first of which goes back to 1662.

9631
CSO: 4400

PRESIDENT MEETS WITH CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 3-4 Oct 80 p 1

[Article : "The President of the Republic addressing officers of the Committees and Departments of the Central Committee: /The Conduct of the Vanguard Militant must be Exemplary at Work and in Daily Life/--Keep the Grass-roots Militant Informed on All Questions that Concern the Country"]

[Text] Algiers (APS)--President Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic, secretary general of the Party of the National Liberation Front, presided Thursday morning at the office of the Presidency of the Republic over a meeting of the committee and department heads of the Central Committee, in accordance with Article 25 of the by-laws of the Central Committee.

In the course of this meeting, which lasted 3 hours, the officer of the permanent secretariat of the Central Committee presented a report on the Party's activities. Also an examination in the light of experience with Party structures was conducted of the implementation texts governing the attributions of the committees and departments, as well as their activities, in conformity with the basic statute of the Party and with the by-laws of the Party and the Central Committee.

Also examined was the organization of elections for the offices of the mouhafadhate [governorate] which will be held beginning the second week of October.

Following a debate on some questions dealing with party structure, harmony and complementarity in Party organizations and executive agencies, the President of the Republic, secretary general of the Party play its role rully in all its different domains.

"The National Liberation Front which guided the liberation struggle assumes today the mission of carrying forward our people's march toward building a socialist society. The slogan "The Leading Party" [Le Parti dirigeant"] must not be a slogan devoid of authentic and efficacious content," he stressed in substance.

The Chief of State, speaking at length of militancy within the Parti, said in this connection that "militancy is a commitment and not an obligation and it is not possible to be neutral vis-a-vis the Revolution. One is either for it or against it. There is no room for the spectator or the wair-and-see person. It behooves us to open the doors to the young, convinced elements so they may assume their responsibilities and be the guarantors of the Revolution's continuity," he underscored.

The President of the Republic insisted moreover on the need to keep the grass-roots militants informed on all questions that concern the country, particularly on the impact of decisions taken at government level.

The Chief of State then gave out organizational directives concerning the activity of Party structures, stressing the need to avoid an inflation of the structures. "The effectiveness of the Party," he said in this connection, "resides in the minutiae of the structures and in the accomplishment by each one of them of its responsibilities as much at the level of the center as of the base. It resides equally in the exercise of its role in all the domains of national activity, particularly in the awareness, drive and control as well as in the fight against the social scourges, by seeing to it that the conduct of the militant, who owes it to himself to be in the avant-garde, shall be exemplary at work and in daily life."

After bringing up some questions of national interest, the President of the Republic at the conlcusion of the meeting reviewed the international situation in a general way. In this connection the Chief of State gave out precise directives on certain problems in which he had to specify Algeria's position with respect to them, among which were international and regional political questions as well as ones of economic character, such as the North-South dialogue and energy.

2750
CSO: 4400

CHADLI ADDRESSES WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 1 Oct 80 p 1

[Article: "President Chadli to Worker's Representatives: "We Must Make Known to the People in All Frankness What Can be Achieved"; passages printed between slantlines appeared in boldface]

[Text] /Algeria's option is based on a national experience which preserves its authenticity, bound to its own values and open to every universal experience./

Algiers (APS) [Algerian Press Service]--President Chadli Bendjedid, President of the Republic, secretary general of the Party of the National Liberation Front, yesterday morning received the members of the National Secretariat of the General Union of Algerian Workers at the office of the Presidency of the Republic.

Present at the meeting were the members of the Central Committee, Messrs Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, officer in charge of the permanent secretariat of the Central Committee, Mouloud Oumeziane, Minister of Labor and Vocational Professional Training, Mohamed Djeghaba, President of the General Organizing Committee, and Mohieddine Animour, adviser to the Presidency of the Republic.

At the start of the proceedings Mr Abdellah Demene Debbih, member of the Central Committee, Secretary General of the Union, gave an account of a certain number of questions that concern the world of labor, as well as problems being encountered in this sector. Workers' representatives were to have their opportunity to voice their views on the questions addressed.

The leadership of the UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers] expressed satisfaction with the successes achieved by the practice of dialogue, especially with regard to participation by representatives of mass organizations at meetings of executive authorities on occasions where questions of vital interest for the nation were being examined.

Following the presentations made to him, the president of the republic, secretary general of the party stressed the fact that the leadership draws strength from its faith in the principles of the Revolution, from the trust and support of the fundamental powers of the Revolution and the people.

Recalling the worker's Constitution, the President of the Republic made the following statement; /"The fundamental line is that wages must correspond with the effort delivered. Transitory measures must conform with the principles of the Statute, so there will be no more contradictions in the future."

The President of the Republic further insisted on the need to avoid making promises only to give satisfaction, without taking into account beforehand the means by which they can be redeemed. In connection with this the Chief of State emphasized the following: /"We must not make promises or commitments if we are not sure we can keep them or carry them out. Besides, we must make known to our people in all frankness what things are possible of achievement, and to specify the time needed to implement an action that has been decided."/

The President of the Republic insisted on the duty of keeping the grass-roots militant thoroughly informed on the principal problems and events. /"This is one of the objective conditions that make it possible for the FLN Party to fulfill its vanguard role."/

After reviewing the various stages of the Revolution, the President of the Republic stated that the strength of the Revolution lies in the fact that it is popular and that no one can pretend or arrogate to himself a right of guardianship over it.

/"Algerian ideology is the option of our people, based on a national experience, which preserves its authenticity, feels pride in its history, is bound to its Arab-Islamic values, as well as being open to all universal experiences," was the substance of what he said.

The President of the Republic was to accentuate the importance of trade union action in defending the gains of the Revolution, emphasizing that trade union activity in Socialist Algeria does not identify itself in its practices with unions in capitalist states where the workers are in one camp and the "bosses" are in the opposing one. The strength of the trade union lies in its faithful representation of the workers who constitute, side by side with the other forces of the Revolution, a portion of the government authority.

Following some remarks regarding certain rumors spreading about at one time or another, the Secretary General of the Party was to say: /"We are very well aware of the path we are to follow and o our obligations towards the Fatherland and the Revolution. No one will succeed in provoking us or fixing our attention on marginal problems. It is obvious that the chief source of these rumors is to be found among those who have been condemned by the people and the militants for their unsavory practices, and who are convinced that the hour has struck to settle accounts. That is why they try to sow confusion, hoping that in that way their appearance before the people's justice will be delayed."/

The President of the Republic affirmed the importance of the mission of all the social forces of the Revolution, while underscoring that the mass organizations are the seedbed of the Party of the vanguard and its popular extension.

After reviewing the outlook for the new society the country is building, the President of the Republic pointed out that the cultural Revolution must not become confined within a narrow concept. On the contrary, it must be extended in the widest

sense with an eye to fostering the feeling of pride for the national history, the consolidation of moral values and revolutionary principles, so that the new society will be built on healthy foundations of which the new man will be the cornerstone.

After addressing certain problems of an international and regional character, the President concluded his orientation address by accentuating the imperative of conjugation and coordination of efforts, the deepening of the dialogue and of the exercise of responsible democracy within an organizational framework.

He also noted with satisfaction the commitment and unrestrained support expressed to him by the officers of the UGTA, commitment and support that take the form of daily deeds for the consolidation and defense of the gains of the Revolution.

2750
CSO: 4400

MILITARY ENGINEERS ASSIST IN EL-ASNAM DISASTER

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 19 Oct 80 p 2

[Article: "The Military Engineers Move Into Action"]

[Text] El Asnam (APS) -- Since Tuesday the units of Military Engineers have been carrying out the second phase of their operations in the El Asnam disaster area. Reestablishing lines of communication, building access roads and roads for traffic and detours and connecting roads, is being carried out at the same time living conditions are being improved in the countryside in general and in the camps of disaster victims in particular. These two tasks are being carried out by about a thousand men who took part Saturday, Sunday and Monday in emergency assistance efforts in El Asnam city.

The Military Engineers, who are combining the resources of the ANP [People's National Army] and national service, coordinate as well those of state enterprises which have hurried their equipment into the stricken areas, in particular those of SNS [National Steel Company], SONATRACH, SONAREM [National Mine Prospecting and Exploitation Company], SONACOME [National Mechnical Engineering Company], SN-METAL [National Metal Construction Company] and SONELEC [National Company for the Manufacture and Installation of Electrical and Electronic Equipment] whose equipment and organization in the field are remarkable.

If the watchword was speed during the first hours of the drama, since Tuesday it has been a time for rigorous planning, organization and assiduous work. Rush jobs are kept for units for whom that is their only mission, because that kind of work requires preliminary survey each time and, a certain amount of time and the necessary resources. The bulk of the units of the Military Engineers, made up of elements from the first, second and seventh Military Regions, is devoted in its entirety to carrying out the second phase of the Intervention Plan. The coordination of assistance activities, especially in the areas of civilian and military infrastructure, has been allowing activities to speed up in the last 5 days, because, as far as the engineer corps command is concerned, the impending rain, the cold settling in and the precarious living conditions are just so many things spurring them on to keep the stricken populations protected from any additional risks.

Camp after camp, without a break, the engineer corps' soldiers sent in turns into El-Asnam by civil defense services are setting up a complete system of resources and services (drinking water, access and sanitation) to provide for the needs of the affected populations in ordered fashion. Each day the military command of the engineer corps makes an up-date of the situation thanks to the activity reports supplied by all the officials of civilian and military units. These reports, in condensed form, permit the staff headquarters of the stricken area to adjust the pace of projects and to set the next objectives. At the present time, the military engineer corps is increasing its efforts to clear the rubble from the urban zone. The disorder and haste which have resulted from the need to act very quickly the first 2 days have been replaced by an iron discipline. No more truck drivers are dumping rubble just anywhere and no more vehicles are parking on access roads or in access areas. The complete demolition of buildings destroyed by the earthquake and the transportation of materials is being carried out methodically and with precision.

Two logistical bases set up outside El-Asnam are able to respond at any time and in very short order to any request for men or vehicles. Covered with dust and staggering with fatigue and lack of sleep, the civilian and military officials in charge of all the engineer corps activities are continuing to carry out this second phase before starting on the third working phase of the assistance plan.

9631
CSO: 4400

GAS-PETROLEUM PARITY GAINS GROUND

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 16 Oct 80 p 6

[Article: "The Principle of Gas-Petroleum Parity Gains Ground"]

[Text] Algiers (APS) -- The principle of parity of the price of natural gas with that of petroleum is becoming increasingly accepted by consumer countries some of which are also producers.

The acceptance of this principle is not solely a matter of rightful demands by producer countries but within consumer countries themselves there are increasing numbers of voices raised advocating the application of this principle which is starting to actually govern natural gas trade on the world market.

The alignment of the price of natural gas with that of petroleum is now becoming necessary, given the importance that natural gas has on the world energy market, along with its characteristics and availability.

Going over the arguments for the principle of parity of the price of natural gas with that of petroleum, the recently issued financial bulletin of the Tambert bank of Brussels makes the observation that "one thing emerges which is certain: future demand for natural gas can only be satisfied if there are considerable price increases; this is indispensable for the expansion of international trade in this source of energy."

The bulletin writes, "For the years ahead, on the one hand we must expect natural gas prices to be more closely aligned with those of petroleum and on the other hand we must expect supplies to come increasingly from faraway sources and to be subject to political vicissitudes," and it emphasizes that "the period of cheap abundant natural gas thus seems to be long past."

In addition, some countries are giving the alignment principle actual concrete form.

In deliveries of Indonesian natural gas to Japan, the Indonesian company Pertamina, which for several months has been demanding parity of natural gas pricing with that of petroleum, seems to be bringing Japan around to accepting the principle, which according to Indonesia ought to bring the natural gas price into line with f.o.b. cost of higher-quality petroleum. This is reported in the petroleum industry bulletin of 10 October.

According to this principle the price of natural gas would therefore exceed the $5 per million BTU currently paid and would make it more costly than a comparable fuel extracted from petroleum; the new formula would be implemented towards the end of the year or at the beginning of next year.

Indonesia this year is exporting 8.4 million tons of liquefied natural gas in return for 3 billion dollars.

In Europe the Netherlands at the beginning of this month concluded an important agreement on applying the principle of parity of the price of natural gas with that of petroleum, an agreement vis-a-vis all its European Community partners and to be applied in two stages. In the first stage the Netherlands are raising the price of the natural gas they deliver to four European countries (the FRG, Belgium, France and Italy) by bringing it in line with the price of heavy diesel applicable as of last 1 July.

In the second stage the Netherlands anticipates the revision of past contracts between the Dutch producing company and its European customers so as to tie the price of Dutch natural gas closer to that of petroleum products.

Holland supplies its European neighbors with 46 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually.

Finally, regarding Algeria, which for its part has for over half a year been demanding that the principle of aligning the price of natural gas to that of petroleum be applied in setting the price of its natural gas: while engaging in negotiations with its trading partners, particularly French and American ones, Algeria has put forward concrete and realistic proposals by defining its position clearly on many occasions.

According to a recent statement of the director of planning in the Ministry of Energy and Petrochemical Industries, the application of parity, which principle is generally accepted throughout the world, must be progressively implemented to take into account the interests of sellers as well as buyers. However, in spite of Algeria's being disposed to really stand firm in its intention to arrive at a final settlement of the matter of revising the price of natural gas founded on new, strong and durable basis there is much beating around the bush on the part of our partners which is difficult to explain and which also defers negotiations to a later date at every turn.

On this subject let us point out that SONATRACH and the French company EDF [French Electric Company] have agreed to meet again at the end of October in Paris for a second round.

The first round, which took place in Algiers, allowed the two parties to draw their points of view closer together to some extent.

9631
CSO: 4400

MEETING OF MASS ORGANIZATIONS' NATIONAL SECRETARIATS

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 23 Oct 80 p 1

[Article: "Preparation of a Work Program for 1981"]

[Text] Algiers (APS) -- Yesterday morning at the Zirout Youcef Palace, Mr Mohamed Cherif Messaadia, member of the Central Committee and an official of the Central Committee's permanent secretariat, presided over the meeting of the Mass Organizations' National Secretariats with the head of the department of Mass Organizations, the head of the organization department, the chairman of the committee on general organization, and the secretaries general of the mass organizations present.

The agenda of this meeting included infusing mass organizations with dynamism at the grass roots level, coordinating the activities of mass organizations in national and international frameworks, how the results of the actions and activities of mass organizations in 1980 have evolved, the preparation of a work program for 1981, and the creation of a coordination and liaison committee including members from the different mass organizations with a view to coordinating activity with the national committee set up following the El-Asnam earthquake.

On this occasion the permanent secretariat official asserted the need to strengthen the contacts of mass organization officials with the grass roots with a view to studying problems the latter is faced with, to try to resolve them, and to mobilize the grass roots to get the struggle for development and for building and construction underway.

The permanent secretariat official urged the mass organization members to strengthen and coordinate their actions and efforts to face up to the problems faced by the masses in their daily life and also to abandon meaningless slogans and give each catchphrase the sense it really has in practice.

9631
CSO: 4400

EXILES PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR NEW SHAH

Nicosia THE CYPRUS WEEKLY in English 7-13 Nov 80 p 7

[Text]

Paris—In an unprecedented gathering, about 300 Iranian exiles met in a forest on the city's western edge last week to announce their recognition of Reza Pahlavi as the Shah of Iran.

Reza, the eldest son of the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, proclaimed himself Shah from his exile in Cairo last Friday on his 20th birthday.

The Paris gathering, which was held in a reception room in the Bois de Boulogne, marked the first time various monarchist exile group in the city officially staged a joint meeting.

The exiles and others at the reception preferred their identities not be published for fear that it could hurt relatives still living in Iran.

Beneath an Iranian flag and a large colour photograph of Reza, the exiles listened to speeches, sang the Iranian national anthem and composed a telegram to Reza announcing their support in his efforts to fulfill his father's death-bed wish that he restore the Pahlavi dynasty.

"We must fight together to save our country" one of the speakers told the group. "The new Shah is our symbol of unity."

Police guards were posted outside the reception room, but there were no disturbances.

Among the exiles attending the meeting was Princess Azadeh Shafik, a niece of the late Shah and Reza's cousin.

Azadeh, whose brother was assassinated by an unidentified gunman in Paris last December, publishes a newsletter in Paris called Iran Libre (Free Iran) and is considered one of the leading figures in the monarchist movement.

Insurrections

She recently told the Associated Press that support for Reza has been growing since his father's death and that he now receives about 300 letters a week from Iranians beseeching him to become their leader.

Monarchist sources among Paris' 5,000 Iranian exiles contend their supporters in Iran will stage an insurrection with military backing before the end of the year.

CSO: 4920

IRAQI SPOKESMAN ON CALL-UP OF AGED FOR SERVICE

LD181029 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Nov 80 p 2

[Text] London--An official spokesman for the Iraqi Embassy in London has affirmed that the Iraqi forces are in an excellent position and that Iraq so far has not thrown all its manpower resources into the war with Iran.

Commenting on press reports misinterpreting the call-up of Iraqi citizens over the age of 65 as an indication of Iraq's need for fighters in its war with Iran, the spokesman explained that the call-up was in response to insistence by thousands of citizens in this age group who personally contacted President Saddam Husayn by letter and cable and who, because of their age, are neither subject to military service nor members of the People's Army. It is to be noted that the statement concerning their call-up was not issued by the Armed Forces General Command, but signed by the Iraqi president himself.

The spokesman asserted that so far Iraq has not declared a general alert and has not called up its armed forces reserves. Also, the number of fighters from the People's Army who have taken part in the battle so far does not exceed 20,000 men out of the Iraqi People's Army total of 300,000.

Referring to reports about the existence of some Arab forces fighting with the Iraqi Army, the spokesman denied the existence of such participation in the fighting in any form or extent. He said: "We are clarifying this for the sake of truth and history, although Iraq is proud of the Arab brothers' national stand and their readiness to participate in the national battle.

The spokesman described the report by London's NOW magazine about the existence of Egyptian forces in Iraq as a fabrication by a Zionist magazine, and part of the Zionist campaign by Zionist quarters to belittle and detract from the importance of the Iraqi victory, which is frightening the Zionist entity which is now mobilizing its media for a campaign of distortion against Iraq.

CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

DRAINAGE PIPE ORDER--A British company, Glynwed Factories, has won a contract to provide the Iraqi government with £6.3 million ($15.1 million) worth of cast iron drainage pipes and connections. A spokesman said that the firm beat off competition from producers in India, China and East European countries to secure the order, which follows another, worth about $6 million from Iraq in April. [Text] [Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 10 Nov 80 p 9]

CSO: 4820

MINISTER COMMENTS ON REAGAN'S WISH TO SEE KING HUSAYN

LD190832 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0715 GMT 19 Nov 80

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Nov--Jordan's Foreign Minister Marwan al-Qasim today welcomed the wish of the American President-elect Ronald Reagan to meet with King Husayn, and described it as a positive initiative.

However, in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-SIYASAH, Minister Al-Qasim said that Jordan will not abandon its policy which made it boycott the Middle East peace talks taking place between Egypt and Israel under America's auspices.

Al-Qasim was replying to the wish expressed by the new American president to meet with the Jordanian monarch at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reagan believes, according to his election [campaign] statements and the views of foreign policy advisers, that Jordan has a special role in the peace moves for finding a solution to the Palestinian question.

The Jordanian minister said about Reagan's wish that "it is a positive initiative; however, we stress that Jordan has talked and continues to talk to the world from a firm and clear foundation based on the necessity to uphold right [words indistinct] with a state which is serious according to the principles it believes would be proper bases for a just and comprehensive solution to the conflict in the region."

The minister recounted the principles by saying that they are Israel's withdrawal from all territories it occupied in the war of 1967; the return of Arab Jerusalem to Arab sovereignty; and insuring the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Replying to other questions the minister reiterated Jordan's support for Kuwait in the wake of the incident in which one of its border posts along its northern border with Iraq was exposed to Iranian raids last week. He condemned Iran, accusing it of committing aggression against Kuwait and also against Iraq. He said: "Jordan quickly took up its natural and pan-Arab stand on the side of sister Kuwait in the same spirit which made it side with sister Iraq in its war with Iran, regardless of the consequences."

Minister Al-Qasim said that Jordan had hoped that Iran [words indistinct] its relations with the Arab world on the basis of mutual respect and the principles called for by the true Islamic spirit."

CSO: 4802

ANNUAL BUDGET PUBLISHED FOR FISCAL YEAR 1980-81

Kuwait AL-KUWAYT AL-YAWM [OFFICIAL GAZETTE] in Arabic 10 Aug 80 pp 1-3

[Article: "Decree on Law No 60 of 1980 Concerning Budget of Government Ministries and Departments for Fiscal Year 1980-81"]

[Text] After perusing the ruler's decree issued on 29 August 1976 amending the constitution,

Articles 142 and 144 of the constitution,

Law No 25 of 1974 on reorganizing the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development,

Law No 106 of 1976 concerning the reserve for the future generations,

Law No 31 of 1978 on the rules for preparing the general budgets and for supervising their implementation and the final accounts,

On the recommendation of the minister of finance,

And with the approval of the Council of Ministers,

We have issued the following law:

Article One

The revenues of the budget of the government ministries and departments is estimated at 4,640,227,000 dinars in accordance with chart A appended to this law.

Article Two

A sum of 928,045,400 dinars of the aforementioned revenues shall be appropriated for the reserve for the future generations in accordance with chart A appended to this law.

Article Three

The expenditures of the government ministries and departments budget are estimated at 2,925,000,000 dinars divided among the chapters listed in chart B appended to this law.

Article Four

A. A sum of 737,181,600 dinars of the aforementioned revenues shall be appropriated to be added to the state's general reserve funds.

B. A sum of 50 million dinars of the aforementioned revenues shall be allocated to meet the increase in the capital of the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development in accordance with the aforementioned law No 25 of 1974.

Article Five

The grade of a civil servant in the service shall be transferred from the category of non-Kuwaiti to the category of Kuwaiti immediately upon his acquisition of Kuwaiti citizenship.

The Civil Service Bureau shall be empowered to amend a number of jobs in each grade according to citizenship.

Article Six

The presence of an appropriation for a certain purpose in the assessment charts for the expenditures of each ministry or department does not absolve the ministries and the departments of observing with utmost care the laws, regulations, decrees and instructions in force insofar as the use of such an appropriation is concerned.

Article Seven

The ministers, each within his jurisdiction, shall implement this law which shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall go into effect as of 1 July 1980.

Amir of Kuwait	Chairman of Council of Ministers	Minister of Finance
Jabir al-Ahmad	Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah	'Abd-al-Rahman Salim al-'Atiqi

Issued at al-Sayf Palace on 2 August 1980.

Estimates of Revenues of Government Ministries and Departments for Fiscal Year 1980-81

Chapter	Category	Fiscal Year 1980-81 Detailed	Fiscal Year 1980-81 Total	Estimates for Fiscal Year 1979-80	Revenues Collected in Fiscal Year 1978-79
1	Sale of crude oil, gas and refined derivatives		4,313,383,000		
1	Crude oil	4,125,509,000		2,604,571,000	2,575,384,867
2	Gas	187,874,000		68,994,000	55,435,148
3	Refined derivatives			347,395,000	307,877,788
2	Taxes on net income and profits		137,650,000		
1	Revenue tax from oil companies	136,900,000		74,243,000	78,677,581
2	Income tax from other sources	750,000		500,000	707,931
3	Property taxes		4,000,000		
1	Property transfer taxes	4,000,000		3,000,000	3,814,749
4	Taxes and fees for goods and services		43,477,000		
1	Concession fees from oil companies	43,173,000		25,334,000	18,707,270
2	Registration and record fees	304,000		193,000	254,274
5	Taxes and fees on commerce and international transactions		47,370,000		
1	Customs taxes and fees	47,370,000		41,200,000	46,310,660
6			81,021,050		
1	Security and justice services	3,705,000		3,404,000	3,602,492
2	Educational and cultural services	3,144,100		2,589,600	2,765,381
3	Health services	300,000		230,000	205,462
4	Housing and utility services	9,791,490		3,045,130	1,971,080
5	Electricity and water services	23,550,000		19,598,000	18,346,076
6	Transport and communication services	37,779,460		33,308,800	38,543,638
7	Revenues from revenue stamps	2,000,000		3,000,000	2,765,607
8	Other services	751,000		525,100	2,313,117
7	Miscellaneous revenues and fees		8,675,300		
1	Revenues and fees	8,675,300		6,759,330	123,402,580
8	Capital revenues		4,650,650		
1	Sale of land and real estate	46,500,650		3,433,000	4,384,155
	Grand Total	4,640,227,000	4,640,227,000	3,241,323,000	3,285,465,856

Distribution of Estimated Revenues

	Fiscal Year 1980-81 Sum	Fiscal Year 1980-81 Percentage	Fiscal Year 1979-80 Sum	Fiscal Year 1979-80 Percentage
Reserve for future generations				
A. Law No 106 of 1976	464,022,700	10.	324,133,000	10.
B. Additional sum	464,022,700	10.		
Increase in capital of Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development	50,000,000	1.08	50,000,000	1.54
General State Reserve Funds	737,181,600	15.89	617,190,000	19.04
Appropriations for Expenditures of Government Ministries and Departments	2,925,000,000	63.03	2,250,000,000	69.42
Grand Total	4,640,227,000	100.0	3,241,323,000	

Chart B. Appropriations for Expenditures of Government Ministries and Departments in Fiscal Year 1980-81

Section		Branch	Expenditure Chapters in Fiscal Year 1980-81: Wages	Public Expenditures	Construction Projects and Public Expenditures	Unclassified Expenditures and Remittance Payments	Total	Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1979-80	Expenditures in Fiscal Year 1979-80
1		Appropriations for Head of State				8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000
2		Amir's Office	1,933,000	515,000		450,000	2,898,000	1,694,000	996,246
3		Accounting Bureau	1,000,000	125,000			1,125,000	1,012,000	782,135
4	1	Council of Ministers	3,160,000	1,777,000		50,000	4,987,000	4,079,000	2,396,394
	2	Religious Interpretation and Legislation Department	946,000	310,000			1,256,000	851,000	510,450
5		Ministry of Planning	3,500,000	4,060,000		6,500,000	14,060,000	13,183,000	3,762,930
6	1	Civil Service Bureau	1,750,000	249,000		8,000,000	9,999,000	8,513,000	3,150,833
	2	Complementary Appropriations	10,980,000				10,980,000	8,580,000	6,021,965
	3	Second Complementary Appropriations	10,000,000				10,000,000		
7		Ministry of Foreign Affairs	6,200,000	7,881,000	11,111,450	2,837,000	28,029,450	13,533,000	8,357,467
8	1	Ministry of Finance-General Administration	6,100,000	24,632,000	200,000,000	1,620,000	232,352,000	22,700,000	16,120,117
	2	Ministry of Finance-General Accounts				1,059,226,400	1,059,226,400	1,482,446,100	1,192,074,488
	3	Customs Department	12,200,000	600,000			12,800,000	17,551,000	17,652,081
9		Ministry of Oil	2,280,000	825,000		11,520,000	14,625,000	13,910,000	1,963,054
10		Ministry of Commerce and Industry	2,940,000	849,000		31,680,000	35,469,000	19,825,000	2,161,453
11	1	Ministry of Defense	6,100,000	99,000		135,000,000	141,199,000	110,073,500	89,918,746
	2	National Guard	7,020,000	441,000		90,000	7,551,000	6,291,000	4,035,220

[Chart 8--Continued]

12		Ministry of Interior	66,100,000	13,350,000		896,000	80,346,000	71,107,000	50,301,419
13		Ministry of Justice	6,400,000	1,500,000			7,936,000	7,243,000	4,678,978
14		Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs	5,350,000	2,320,000		269,000	7,919,000	7,050,000	4,871,228
15		Ministry of Education	150,800,000	31,000,000		2,250,000	184,050,000	165,420,000	122,622,581
16		Ministry of Information	15,470,000	9,000,000	2,000,000	989,000	27,459,000	22,209,000	16,616,596
17		Ministry of Health	74,100,000	42,000,000		11,570,000	127,570,000	97,500,000	62,302,823
18		Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	11,500,000	3,300,000		16,600,000	31,400,000	27,562,000	20,316,860
19		Ministry of Housing	920,000	400,000			1,320,000	1,261,000	1,055,047
20	1	Ministry of Electricity and Water	25,300,000	10,100,000	190,000,000		225,400,000	32,400,000	24,582,679
	2	Electricity and Water Distillation Plants	7,750,000	11,500,000		300,000,000	319,250,000	17,425,000	12,329,919
21	1	Ministry of Communication-Telegraph and Telephone	23,500,000	3,090,000	30,990,000		57,580,000	21,732,000	15,112,930
	2	Post	4,270,000	1,270,000			5,540,000	5,001,000	3,454,395
	3	Civil Aviation	4,650,000	2,800,000	2,438,500		9,888,500	6,376,000	4,599,274
22		Ministry of Public Works	28,250,000	13,250,000	183,941,000	300,000	225,741,000	38,700,000	27,591,429
		Complementary Appropriation*			25,000,000		25,000,000		
		Sums Expected Not To Be Spent	1,469,000	2,279,500	1,480,950	847,400	6,076,850	3,687,100	
		Grand Total	499,000,000	185,000,000	644,000,000	1,597,000,000	2,925,000,000	2,250,000,000	1,728,339,673

*To be distributed during the year with the knowledge of the Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Finance.

PETROLEUM TRANSPORT COMPANY ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 10 Aug 80 p 12

[Article: "Annual Report of Arab Maritime Oil Transport Company; Operation at Fleet's Full Capacity, Squeeze in Expenditures and Improvement in Maritime Transport Revenues Reduced Losses"]

[Text] A report by the board of directors of the Arab Maritime Oil Transport Company, included in the company's general annual report, has said that the company's fleet, comprised of eight units, continued to operate at full capacity throughout the year and that most of this fleet is on lease contracts for certain periods of time. Moreover, two liquefied gas ships (al-Barri and al-Bada') have joined this fleet. The first joined the fleet in the first half of the year and the second joined it at the end of the year.

The board of directors' report also says that there was relative improvement in the maritime shipping rates in the second half of the year and that this raised the company's revenues.

Despite the increased work load, the number of workers in the company has not risen beyond the number existing at the end of last year. Meanwhile, the company has continued to fill the vacancies with specialized Arab cadres and to develop the workers and provide them with effective training so that they may be familiar with the various aspects of development in the international maritime industry. This is in addition to the participation of some of the workers in specialized international maritime conferences and seminars to gain more knowledge with the aim of adopting the best methods for operating tankers.

The report also says that a system of control over the stores [al-makhzun] has been drawn up and implemented. Moreover, the system of storage followup and control has been implemented at the information center of the main office. The system of purchase followup has also been put into operation. Additionally, work is underway to formulate and implement a system for maintenance of the tankers and to design, formulate and examine the programs of the wages system tried in the last 5 months of last year. It is hoped that the manual system will be discarded finally at the beginning of next year.

The report adds that as in the past year, the company continues to exert pressure on some of the administrative expenditure. As a result of the improvement in maritime shipping revenues at the end of this year, of the reparations paid by a number of the shareholders in accordance with the OAPEC Ministerial Council decision taken at the end of last year and as a result of the company's participation with other Arab hydrocarbons shipping companies to form a group in the international insurance market, the company's losses have been reduced and its financial position has been somewhat improved.

8494
CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

CONTAINERIZED SHIPPING PLANS--A specialized British publication reported yesterday that Kuwaiti and Malaysian commercial enterprises have agreed on setting up a joint containerized shipping company. The publication, (LLOYDS LIST), said that the company, owned by the Kuwaiti Balasim General Trade Company and the state-owned Malaysian International Shipping Company, will begin its operations with three ships later this month. The publication has also said that the company will operate its ships on a route from the Gulf to Japan and then to the United States and a return route to Kuwait via Australia. [Text] [Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 7 Aug 80 p 13] 8494

CONTROLS ON ARAB CORRESPONDENTS--Arab journalists will not be allowed to work in Kuwait before acquiring an advance permit from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information. This measure will go into effect at the beginning of next year. The Kuwaiti Ministry of Information has asked the local papers to supply it with the names of all the journalists working in them. [Text] [Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 23 Aug 80 p 11] 8494

CSO: 4802

FRENCH VIEW OF TUNISIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS ON EVE OF BARRE VISIT TO TUNISIA

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 7 Oct 80 p 4

[Article: "AFP and Mr Barre's Forthcoming Visit to Tunisia--Fair Weather for Paris-Tunis Relations"]

[Text] Commenting on the forthcoming visit of Mr Raymond Barre to Tunisia, AFP writes the following:

French Prime Minister Raymond's visit to Tunisia at the end of October takes on a special importance, Tunis being the headquarters of the League of Arab States, an active member of the Islamic Conference, the Organization of African Unity and the nonaligned nations.

The secretaries General of the first two organizations are incidentally Tunisians. They are Messrs Chedi Klibi for the Arab League and Habib Chatty for the Islamic Conference.

The fact is that Tunisia plays an important role in the hottest pressure points of the world, namely the war between Iraq and Iran, the Soviet incursion in Afghanistan, and the Near East crisis, and a power such as France must out of necessity take this into account.

Moreover, relations between Paris and Tunis are cordial.

In fact a "convergence of policies" and a "similarity of positions" were noted in connection with the major problems addressed during the last visit to Tunisia, at the beginning of September, by the French Foreign Minister, Mr Jean-Francoi -Poncet, which should facilitate political cooperation to grow closer year by year.

In regard to economic relations, the world economic situation is a difficult one, as both parties recognized. It does not permit ambitious commitments.

Tunisia, however, has sent out an appeal to France and its European supporters "for reexamination of the protectionist and safeguarding measures adopted by the EEC." measures which according to Tunis are in contravention with the 1976 Agreement between Tunisia and the European Economic Community.

Tunisia also desires to be henceforth "associated with negotiations with candidates for the enlargement" of the EEC.

Observers believe that these political and economic problems will be examined in their broad strokes by Mr Barre and his Tunisian opposite number, Mr Mohamed Mzali.

2750
CSO: 4400

BOURGUIBA ASSURES PALESTINIANS OF FRENCH BACKING

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 5 Oct 80 p 1

[Report on discussion between Mohamed Mzali and Farouk Kaddoumi; date not given]

[Text] New York--Prime minister, Mohamed Mzali, entertained Friday afternoon Mr Farouk Kaddoumi, chief of the Political Department of the PLO at his New York residence.

The Palestinian leader following the interview informed the TAP [Tunis-Africa Press Agency] that the conversations had been "fruitful" and "enabled us to discuss the most recent developments of the situation in the Middle East, and particularly to bring up the regrettable war between our Iraqi and Iranian brothers."

He went on to say "Mr Prime Minister gave us an account of the gains achieved by the Supreme Fighter, President Habib Bourguiba for the benefit of the Palestinian cause during his stay in Paris and the support he was promised on France's part."

The interview addressed among other things strengthening the aid for the just struggle of the Palestinian people as well as the repeated attacks by Israeli Zionist forces on South Lebanon and the need for the Arab countries to take steps in the very near future to put a stop to these aggressions, Mr Kaddoumi concluded.

Mr Hassan Belkhoja, foreign minister, was present at the interview.

2750
CSO: 4400

INCREASED FRENCH AID TO TUNISIA REPORTED

Moalla, Monory Head Session

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 26 Oct 80 p 1

[Text] An integrated study for the development of Southern Tunisia.
France plans to increase its public-sector aid to Tunisia.
Toward settlement of the issue of French accounts frozen in Tunisia.

Minister of Finance and Plan Mansour Moalla had a private talk with French Minister of Economy Rene Monory yesterday morning in the former's office before jointly presiding over a Franco-Tunisian working session devoted to the examination of ways and means of promoting economic and financial cooperation between the two countries.

As Mr Monory indicated at the end of this working session, in connection with it the two parties specified the ways and means of establishing a Franco-Tunisian financial institute which will be called on to participate in development projects and which could be extended to include Arab partners.

The French minister of economy indicated that both Tunisians and French have agreed to jointly engage in an integrated study for the purpose of developing Southwestern and Southern Tunisia.

Regarding the next Tunisian development plan, which he described as "ambitious," Mr Monory let it be known that in the course of their discussions the French representatives raised the question of financial support with their interlocutors, which France has extended in the form of public-sector aid for the sixth Tunisian plan.

He assured us that the French Government plans to again increase the volume of this public-sector aid to Tunisia and to develop exchanges for the purpose of establishing true technical cooperation designed to improve the training of administrative personnel.

Furthermore, the two parties have agreed to settle the issue of French accounts frozen in Tunisia.

Barre on French Participation

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 24 Oct 80 p 1

[Report of statement by French Prime Minister Raymond Barre: "The Time Has Come for Closer French Participation in Tunisian Industrial Development"]

[Text] From today until the 26 October, French Prime Minister Raymond Barre and his wife will be the guests of Tunisia, in response to an invitation from Mr and Mrs Mohamed Mzali.

This official visit comes under the double heading of work and pleasant memories. It is the affectionate and concrete expression of those privileged ties, "with neither hatred nor rancor," which Bourguiba succeeded in cementing between Tunisia and France.

In an exclusive statement made to LA PRESSE, Mr Raymond Barre made clearer the scope of his visit:

"In responding to the Tunisian Government's invitation, I hope to bear witness to the intimacy of the bonds that unite France and Tunisia.

"To be sure, no French prime minister has visited Tunisia since President Mendes-France did so in 1954. But the very frequent contacts between prime ministers of the two governments, such as President Habib Bourguiba's visit to France in 1972 and President Valery Giscard d'Estaing's to Tunisia in 1975, bear ample witness to the relations of friendship, trust and solidarity the two countries maintain with one another.

"My visit is therefore in response to my desire to discuss with Prime Minister Mzali and the Tunisian Government the major political issues that are of concern to Tunisia and France and to investigate ways of intensifying an already very close form of bilateral cooperation.

"From a personal standpoint, it is furthermore an opportunity to rediscover memories very dear to me, since it was in your country, at the Tunis Institute of Higher Learning, that I began my university career."

A Just and Lasting Solution to the Near East Conflict

"I will have extensive exchanges of views with the new Tunisian Government headed by Prime Minister Mzali. I am thinking particularly of the search for a just and lasting solution to the conflict that is tearing apart the Near East. Our two countries maintain views on this issue that are very close. We are also convinced that, from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, it is up to countries bordering on it to themselves resolve those problems that arise and that, consequently, we must grant priority to those essential trump cards which are trust, mutual respect and cooperation.

"We will also study with the Tunisian Government the question of how new enthusiasm can be injected into our bilateral relations.

"In the space of nearly 30 years, France and Tunisia have built up close, solid relations based on intensive exchanges of people, culture, techniques and ideas. All sectors of our countries' activities are affected by these relations, whether business, university, medical corps or research institute operations are involved. We have here, accumulated in the course of time, a common capital at all levels, which it is up to us to make productive."

Entering a New Phase

"In connection with this, the possibilities are numerous. We will fully investigate them, taking care to see to it that the exemplary cooperation that exists between our two countries enters a new phase. In the economic sector in particular, the time has come — as the Tunisian Government desires — for the closer participation of French firms in the industrial development of Tunisia. We will study the matter with the most open of minds, indeed that of the North-South dialogue to which France, like Tunisia, is most particularly attached.

"Lastly, there is one thing that heartens me in our relations. And that is the presence in France of a sizable community of Tunisian nationals and in Tunisia of a large number of my fellow Frenchmen. Both contribute very largely to the development of the two countries. Their activity, their dynamism are an essential gauge of the quality of our relations. The French Government attaches quite special value to it and hopes to maintain close cooperation with the Tunisian Government on the matter.

Mzali: More Cooperation With France

Paris LE FIGARO in French 24 Oct 80 p 2

[Interview with Tunisian Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali by Jean-Marc Kalflèche; date and place not given]

[Text] Raymond Barre leaves Paris today for Tunis where he will spend 48 hours accompanied by Rene Monory and Michel Cointat. This visit by the prime minister, who will be received tomorrow at the Palais de Carthage [Government House] by President Habib Bourguiba, has been long in preparation. Jean-Francois Deniau, then minister of foreign trade, had preceded him in June and Jean-Francois Poncet went to Tunis on 3-4 September to announce a step-up in cooperation.

As Mohamed Mzali emphasized in the lengthy interview he granted us, the Tunisians in fact feel that the time has come to decide on the most ambitious objectives together. Because of their success in the field of industrial subcontracting (one might say that their country was "the paradise of small and medium-sized businesses"), they hope to get more involved in it and, for example, that Peugeot will no longer be satisfied with just assembling vehicles at Sousse but will also manufacture parts locally. Feeling that they are in a particularly good position at the moment in terms of inter-Arab affairs (they control the secretariats general of both the Islamic Conference and the Arab League, with headquarters in Tunis), the Tunisians would also like to impart a very specific content to the "trilogue" and the creation of an Arab-Franco-Tunisian bank will be the first item on the agenda between Raymond Barre and Mohamed Mzali.

Near East problems will also be discussed and among them, we may imagine, the problem posed by Libyan activism. A sort of "armed peace" has been established between Tunis and Tripoli as, moreover, has been between Tripoli and Paris. Could the Mzali government's decision to exploit the "Isis" deposit in the Gulf of Gabes jeopardize the peace? They do not think so in Tunis, and even less that there may be a new coup in Gafsa. Everything would be doomed to failure, first of all the open policy pursued by Hedi Nouira's successor with the support of the "supreme fighter."

26 January 1978: bloody riots in Tunis. 29 January 1979: Tunisians trained in Libya attempt to foment a revolt in Gafsa. Very recent events, but which here seem to be oddly remote. The second of these had created an atmosphere amenable to national reconciliation even before the withdrawal of Mr Hedi Nouira, felled by a cerebral hemorrhage. It is up to Mohamed Mzali, the new prime minister chosen by Habib Bourguiba and consequently "appointed heir" pending a new order, to set it [reconciliation] in motion. Eighteen months later (he was appointed on 23 April 1979), he seems to have won his bet.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, you are the "open-policy" man, but we are nevertheless surprised at statements attributed to you in a recent issue of JEUNE AFRIQUE: "I am in the process," you said, "of tossing out organizational structures inherited from some forgotten past. I am a subversive in my own way..." Now what is this "forgotten past"?

[Answer] I didn't put it exactly that way, but that makes little difference... "Organizational structures inherited from some forgotten past" are our administrative organizations and their abusive obsessions inherited from the Turks and from Napoleon through the expedient of the protectorate and finally from the experience of compulsory cooperation we went through some time after independence.

I am determined to challenge them, to combat these acquired habits, the administrative machine that divorces the people from their government. That is what I meant to say. We always get caught up in ideological debates, but we have to begin to reform this kind of thing

"Gradual" Change

[Question] This divorce between the administration and the people is today at the heart of the debate in all African capitals. But there are two schools of thought: those who believe that the time has come to go from a single party to a multiparty system and those who are convinced that it is enough to simply institute pluralism within the single party. You seem to be an advocate of the latter position.

[Answer] I don't think I have to choose between the two. The Destourian Socialist Party (PSD) will soon be 50 years old and I maintain that it will go on opening itself to new generations and new ideas, that it has not changed its character since its founding in 1934. When it was the Neo-Destourian Front, it was a liberation front that was neither sectarian nor monolithic and, since independence, it has first of all been a rallying point for our energies.

Naturally, there have been crises. But the miracle is that the president of the party, Habib Bourguiba, who is still at the tiller, is in the vanguard of those who advocate an open policy.

The PSD is not a party that has been decreed, as in some other Third World countries; it is a party legitimized by history, a "front" that normally conceals a bubbling cauldron if ideas and sometimes opposing factions. Having said this, I can only add that I am not a prophet. Perhaps Tunisia will evolve in the direction of a multiparty system. It has already had one. The socialist or communist "Archeos" [cf. arch 'land held collectively without right of alienation under customary law'] were not eliminated by us but democratically, by the people. I only hope that my party will always be "neo," that is, open to the nation's active forces.

[Question] This brings us right up to the two most important political events that have occurred in Tunisia since you became head of the government: on the one hand, the convocation of the next party congress in May 1981, which deviates from PSD custom (according to law, it should have been set for 1984), and, on the other, the creation of a "national labor-union commission" that brings together representatives of the former UGTT [Tunisian General Federation of Labor], "condemned" after 26 January 1978, and those of the new one, composed of the same number of delegates. In justification of the first event, you invoked the need for bringing together "the psychological and human factors" required for the success of the next 5-year plan (1982-1987). This in itself resembled government self-criticism, but this feeling is reinforced when we see how you have opened the door wide to excluded and in some cases condemned union members...

[Answer] There is an Arab proverb that goes: "You can't lead people into paradise with chains." What would be the sense of the next plan if, in the context of a PSD congress, not all the leaders had an opportunity to discuss and participate in the shaping of their alternatives? Furthermore, what hope would we have of seeing the objectives we have set ourselves achieved if the country were to go on living in an atmosphere of social unrest?

I have met with former UGTT leaders. I know that the great majority of them are patriots. I told them: "As patriots, we ought to be able to reach agreement with one another," and I believe that we are achieving that goal. In 5 months time, not only have we emptied the prisons and released all union members, but some of them, still in prison only 2 months ago, are now participating in the management of the UGTT. We have to do this! And this took place without a hitch, gradually, as though it was a natural evolution.

Small and Medium-Sized Business Paradise

[Question] For several years now, one of the fundamental options of the Tunisian economic strategy has been subcontracting or, if you like, an alliance of foreign brands, manufacturing processes and investors with Tunisian manpower to export from Tunisia what would otherwise be manufactured at much greater cost in Europe.

This policy has produced excellent results in view of the fact that 300 small and medium-sized businesses, or almost that many, have established themselves in your country over the past 7 years. Now many of these are French and you are asking that this development be accelerated. Aren't you afraid that this kind of talk might offend those Frenchmen who are concerned over the increase in unemployment at home?

[Answer] Perhaps, but that is only because they don't understand the true factors involved in the problem.

Tunisia is not asking for a handout. It is anxious to skip the phase of aid and cooperation by replacing it. What is it trying to achieve? The conciliation of the interests of both parties.

When a French industry establishes itself here, for you that means exports of equipment, licenses and staff, therefore the creation of jobs.

When Tunisia asks France to help it exploit the gas deposits buried under the waters of the Gulf of Gabes, which represents an investment of some 500 million francs, it will grant a profit — six times that sum — that will be equitably distributed and it knows that this energy resource will certainly not be — on the contrary — an unemployment producing factor for you in France...

When we ask France, as we are now doing, to participate in a bank in which one-third of the capital is Tunisian, one-third Arab and one-third French, we are concerned with our own interests, but also with France's. Because this bank will produce profits, create transfers of French technology, sales of French capital goods, etc. Cooperation should be concrete in nature.

This is the only way to convince the people of Tunisia that between us and France there is really a solidarity of interests and not just a rate of speed reached in the days of the protectorate... We have to shift into high gear, into fourth, into fifth. When we go on about the "contract of civilization" that links us to one another, I'm all for it. That's all very well, but I wonder what exactly is there in it for us...

With our bank plan, we offer a very specific response to Valery Giscard d'Estaing's appeal for a "trilogue."

To Be an Arab and a Cartesian

[Question] We have yet to ask you about your oil resources. Will they be developed? Will Libya let you exploit certain known deposits in the Gulf of Gabes? Is it true that you are urging the French Oil Company to immediately exploit one of them, the "Isis" deposit, regardless of how Tripoli reacts?

[Answer] The "Isis" is outside the disputed area. As for the others, we place our trust in the International Court at the Hague and are counting on the deadline's being broken in a year's time.

[Question] However, there is still a bone of political contention between Tunis and Tripoli. Libya is still training 2,000 of your nationals in its camps and Kadhafi accuses you of serving as a foreign base of operations for one of his former ministers, Omar Meheichi...

[Answer] I fear that our Libyan friends — our neighbors, not friends — are misinformed on that point. Meheichi has not been here since April or May.

[Question] But let's get back to Tunisia. You seem to embody some of these apparent contradictions in yourself. You studied philosophy at the Sorbonne but are a resolute partisan of Arabization of education. Many observers think that you are better equipped than Mr Hedi Nouira to retain the respect of the "integrationist" France that is evolving, but you were the promoter of a family planning experiment that must have raised the hackles on lots of old fogeys. Are these contradictions or not?

[Answer] Only in the eyes of the Manicheans. I don't think I have to choose between East and West.

I am a Tunisian patriot and I take upon myself all the historical characteristics of my Tunisian heritage: Arabism, Islam, but also a Western contribution, the Cartesian approach and the French language. At this level, there is no contradiction in terms, and why would an Arabist, simply because he is an Arabist, be opposed to family planning and the banning of polygamy, which is what President Bourguiba has always wanted?

The Tunisians could not be real partners as far as France is concerned if they did not fully acknowledge their Arab and Islamic culture. The basis for our education is Arabic, but more and better French is being taught in Tunisia than before. There is no contradiction in this.

If I were some sort of second-rate Frenchman, what interest could I have for you? None. Zero. Tunisia can only play its role if it is peopled with Tunisians who respect one another, who acknowledge their Islamic culture and can assimilate their biculturalism on that basis. The more we defend Islam in terms of its modern aspects, the more we are regarded by the people as the defenders of the authentic values of Islam.

11,466
CSO: 4400

TWENTY-FIRST GENERAL SESSION OF UNESCO IN BELGRADE

Tunis LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE in French 11 Oct 80 p 3

[Article by B. Ben Milad: "Some Thoughts" on the General Session of UNESCO in Belgrade, 23-29 September 1980]

[Text] The great international organizations are escaping less and less from the discords that increasingly each day set the industrialized and western countries in opposition to the Third World countries, among which the Arab countries are showing increasing activity.

Whether it be on questions of the new world economic order, the new world order of information, or on more general questions or ones of a political character, the gulf that separates them gives the impression of growing a little wider at every turn.

And there is no better demonstration of this than the aspect assumed often, nearly every time, by the meetings of these organizations, UNESCO for example, whose 21st General Session just held at Belgrade from 23 to 29 September 1980 was no exception to this rule.

Several important points were on the agenda: discussion of precise projects of a cultural, scientific and technical character, as well as discussion of the important McBride Report on information and communication.

All these questions, harmless on their face, not ones to create a problem, nonetheless underscored in varying degrees the near impossibility for the participants to arrive at any kind of meeting of minds.

This is how it was, for instance, with the problem of the equality of all countries over information and communication. This is an important demand of the Third World countries, which aspire to a new world order of information being established. This item provoked a unanimous uproar on the part of the western countries. Under the pretext of defending the "intangible" principle of freedom of the press--a principle that is very respectable and not often very respected--the latter group refused categorically to allow anyone to touch the monopoly the international press agencies exercise world-wide over information dissemination.

A demand such as this is however most thoroughly justified. And one needs to go no further than to take a look at the manner in which a certain western press

agency reported the work of this 21st session of the General UNESCO Conference to be convinced of this fact, and to see for oneself to what degree this so-called freedom of information is basically, and indeed in many cases, nothing more than the freedom to manipulate this information.

By the same token, giving ever dwindling support to the efforts of the Arab countries on behalf of the protection and integrity of the Islamic and Christian Holy Places against Zionist profanations, both in Jerusalem and in other occupied Arab territories, or Arab and African positions taken against apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination, the same media do a poor job of masking their irritation at what they call a " politicizing" of UNESCO. According to them, a development such as this risks the paralysis of this organization and its deferment from the technical, scientific and cultural goals that should remain proper to it.

In other words, defending human rights that have been kicked around by racists in Africa and elsewhere, or protecting the places sacred to the spirit, freighted with history and civilization, is nothing else but a political gesture quite alien to the mission of UNESCO and at odds with its spirit!!! [sic]

If this means anything at all it is surely that the people on the one side and the other in no way share the same conception of the role and nature of this organization. And this no doubt explains the unanimity on the part of the industrialized nations in refusing to increase the organization's budget. This request made by Director General Ahmadou Mahtar M'bow was judged "unrealistic" and was quite simply turned down. This grave dicision had no more definitive effect than to further clarify the very threat of paralysis which the industrialized countries denounced. And it can only provoke serious anxiety concerning the future of UNESCO, the same concern voiced by President Ahmed Sékou Touré when he invited "the industrialized countries and the developing countries to transcend their differences."

Will this appeal be heard? One may doubt as much. For though it may be easy for those on the one hand to temper their discussions it is more difficult for the others to moderate their appetites.

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EXTRAORDINARY INFLATION, COOPERATIVE SYSTEM SCRUTINIZED

Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 26, 27, 28, 29 Oct 80

/Article by F'uad Ayyub, Fathi Rizq, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Karim and Ibrahim Ahmad: "High Prices--How Will We Cope with Them?/

/26 Oct 80 p 5/

/Text/ The mad increase in foodstuffs and consumer goods prices is no longer an ordinary matter subject to well known economic criteria. Rather, it is a matter of the individual judgments of those who control the market in the country. A single food commodity will be exposed to an increase of up to 80 percent then a corresponding drop in 60 days or less. This may be attributed to the fact that the market is not governed by laws or even commercial customs by virtue of which people can proceed. The victim of this inflation is the employee with a limited income, or even an average income, whether he is a native or expatriate, because he is not cared for by the subsidies that the government provides for flour, rice and sugar for citizens--they are just three out of hundreds of foodstuffs and consumer goods.

In the context of the inflation whose upsurge began in 1975 and has not stopped yet, prices have risen by different proportions, at a general rate of 50 percent for foodstuffs. Therefore the rise in salaries of government and consequently domestic sector employees is a necessity in order to alleviate the sufferings of all the people. Assuring minimum prosperity for the citizen and improving his standard of living, as well as subsidizing more foodstuffs, whether for citizens--or for all people, which would be more beneficial--are becoming an urgent matter, since employees and workers cannot dispense with stable prices and limits on their amazing increases, along with raises in salaries.

In a study prepared by the Planning Ministry's Central Department of Statistics concerning prices and the evolution of prices in the country in 1979 on the basis of a month-by-month comparison as well as comparisons with the previous year, the evolution of price increases in various commodities is clear. If the increase in commodity, foodstuffs and other prices in 1979 is added to previous years, starting in 1977, the picture will be even clearer. It is natural that prices should rise by very low rates once a year, but for them to rise more than once a year is bewildering to people.

The year 1979 alone witnessed serious developments in prices, as was stated in the Central Department of Statistics study covering 12 months. The prices of most commodities increased by rates ranging from 5 to 14 percent, a serious phenomenon showing the extent that price fluctuations in the markets has reached. For example, but not exclusively:

Meat and eggs: Their prices in Abu Dhabi were stable in January and February, then started to rise until July and August, when they dropped 4 percent (because of the month of Ramadan). Then they resumed a tremendous rise, until they reached 15 percent in December. The same in Dubai; the increase in December even came to 20 percent. Likewise, in Sharjah, the rate reached 14 percent, and in Ra's al-Khaymah 13 percent.

Fish and shrimp: They rose by 8 percent in Abu Dhabi, then 9 percent, then dropped in July and September, then rose again by 4 percent in December. In Dubai the rate of increase in the price came to 9 percent in February, then 20 percent in March, finally reaching 14 percent in October and 28 percent in November and December! In Sharjah prices vacillated between rises and falls, ending with a 20 percent increase in December, while in Ra's al-Khaymah the rate of increase reached 17 percent.

The same with other commodities, especially vegetables, whose price increases, which were continuous, came to 53 percent in Abu Dhabi, 61 percent in Dubai, 45 percent in Sharjah and 77 percent in Ra's al-Khaymah.

The maximum increase in milk and dairy products in Abu Dhabi, 6% came in March, followed by August with 4 percent. In Dubai, the maximum increase came to 3 percent last November. In Sharjah the rate of increase rose to 8 percent in May then 7 percent in June; then the rate of increase dropped in August and September, then rose by 5 percent in December. In Ra's al-Khaymah the maximum increase in these goods, 5 percent, came in March; then the price decreased in December by 3 percent.

Beans Increased by 80 percent in September

In Abu Dhabi, the maximum increase for beans came to 8 percent in March; that increase continued in April, then dropped 5 percent and 9 percent in July and August (Ramadan), then began increasing again, reaching 8 percent in November, then dropped again, by 6 percent, in December. In Sharjah, the rise was 6 percent in April; it then dropped by 15 and 18 percent in July and August, then rose again in an insane manner, reaching 80 percent in September. The increase then dropped to 18 percent in October. In Ra's al-Khaymah the maximum increase was 5 percent, in February.

Shipments and transport also increased by 14 percent in Abu Dhabi and Dubai and by 15 percent in Sharjah.

Economists' Views

This is what the Ministry of Planning's statistics say. What is the opinion of persons working in the Economic Affairs Agency of the Ministry of Economy and Trade?

Mr Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Azim, deputy manager of the Economic Affairs Department in the Ministry of Economy and Trade, says: "The state of the emirates is following the system of a free economy. It leaves broad scope for competition and action of the law of supply and demand. The government intervenes in the market system only to the extent that that will help provide the consumers' requirements for essential commodities. The government rarely intervenes in the natural course of the market system except in order to protect the consumer and lessen the burdens of living on citizens and those resident in the territory of the state. In 1974 the government decided to give all persons working in ministries and government departments a minimum of 200 and maximum of 500 dirhams per month in a high cost of living allowance of 20 percent of base salary and to increase the social subsidies paid out to entitled persons by 50 percent."

He adds, "It was decided to subsidize the main foodstuffs (rice, sugar and flour) and distribute them to citizens at subsidized prices. The sum of 500 million dirhams was allotted for this purpose and the task of distributing these commodities at low prices was assigned. On 1 September 1972 his highness the president of the state issued a decree abrogating customs duties on all foodstuffs.

"On 14 January 1979, Law No 3 for the Year 1979 was issued establishing the Abu Dhabi Foodstuffs Company with a capital of 10 million dirhams. The government of Abu Dhabi contributed 20 percent of the capital, 30 percent belonged to founders who were citizens, and 50 percent was the contribution of citizens. The company was to import foodstuffs from international markets and distribute them at appropriate prices to citizens and local merchants in order to protect them from fluctuations in world prices."

The Emirates: The Highest Price Increases in the World

Mr Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Azim underlines the fact of price increases in the state of the United Arab Emirates by saying, "As regards the prices of essential consumer goods, as I have said there are no government importing organizations to break the monopolies except for the Abu Dhabi Foodstuffs Company, which is still in its first stages and has not yet been able to expand the supply base. In addition there is no system for compulsory pricing and no kind of price surveillance in the state; also, local production of foodstuffs is slight and the country relies entirely on imports from abroad--importing inflation from foreign exporting countries.

"If we add the increase in the commercial profit margin of the country's merchants to what has been described above, the prices of essential commodities are increasing constantly, which is making the state of the United Arab Emirates one of the countries with the highest increases in prices in the world, not to speak of the differences in commodity prices among the emirates of the federation."

Food Prices Increased More than 50 Percent

Mr Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Azim adds, "In a study prepared by the Ministry of Economy and Trade on the general price level of main essential commodities in the country between 1977 and 1979, which dealt with consumer good categories, the following was evident:

"The increase in food prices from 1976 to 1979 came to 48 percent. If we take the constant increase in food prices in 1980 in general into consideration we will find that food prices have increased more than 50 percent.

"Fuel, water and electricity: it was established in the study prepared by the Ministry of Economy that their prices increased by 49 percent in 1979 over 1976 as well.

"The clothing and apparel category increased by 38 percent in 1979 over 1976, as is apparent from studies which the ministry has carried out.

"The category of household goods and services increased by 30 percent in 1979 over 1976.

"Housing: housing expenses increased by 100 percent from 1973 to 1976, then realized a relative drop from 1976 to 1979. Housing expenses then resumed increasing in 1980."

Burdens of Living Have Increased

Mr 'Ali Mahmud, economic researcher in the Ministry of Economy, says, "If the various studies place emphasis on a rise in the prices of goods and services, that means an increase in the burdens of living for families with average incomes."

The following appears in the study Mr 'Ali Mahmud is preparing on "the general price level in the state of the United Arab Emirates," which includes the effect of the increase in prices on average-income families in Abu Dhabi and the emirates:

Average expenses in the city of Abu Dhabi: this is a hypothetical study of a family whose monthly income was 5,080 dirhams per month in 1976. This income was adequate for a family in 1978 prices. If we assume that the total annual income of this family was 60,960 dirhams in 1978, the study shows that the family spent as follows: food, 18,000 dirhams a year; fuel, 3,060 dirhams; clothing, 6,600 dirhams; household goods and services, 4,100 dirhams; other goods, 4,000 dirhams; housing, 25,000 dirhams; and savings, zero. This means that that family spent all its income on the burdens of living in accordance with 1976 prices.

The overall expenses of the same family in 1980, with its annual income remaining stable, was as follows: food, 24,660 dirhams; fuel, electricity and water, 4,000 dirhams; clothing, 8,600 dirhams; household goods and services, 5,400 dirhams, other goods, 5,000 dirhams; housing, 29,000 dirhams. From the above example, we find that the total income of an average-income family was 60,960 dirhams during the year and that its expenses, according to the prices of goods and services in 1980, were 76,660 dirhams. This means that that family needed to borrow about 16,000 dirhams a year to cover its expenses.

Average expenses in the northern emirates: as is apparent from the hypothetical study Mr 'Ali Mahmud prepared on an average-income family in the northern emirates, the annual income of the family totalled 43,940 dirhams in 1978 which it spent, on the basis of 1978 prices, as follows: food, 16,220 dirhams; fuel, electricity and water, 3,470 dirhams; clothing, 6,540 dirhams; household goods and services, 3,900 dirhams; other commodities, 3,900 dirhams; housing, 10,000 dirhams; and savings, zero--that is, it spent its income in full.

The study stresses that this family's expenses increased in 1980 as follows: food, 21,880 dirhams; fuel, electricity and water, 4,600 dirhams; clothing, 8,100 dirhams, household goods and services, 5,100 dirhams; other commodities, 4,850 dirhams; housing, 10,000 dirhams. If we assume that this family's income is fixed, we will find that this family needs to borrow 11,C'0 dirhams a year to face the burdens of life.

40 Percent Additional Burdens on Abu Dhabi Inhabitants

The hypothetical study which Mr 'Ali Mahmud, economic researcher in the Ministry of Economy, is preparing, proves that the inhabitants of Abu Dhabi defray costs about 40 percent greater than those in the northern emirates, since the amount of the difference between the average expenses of the average-income family in the town of Abu Dhabi and those of corresponding families in the northern towns of the emirates came to 1,418 dirhams per month in 1978; this difference increased in 1980 to 1,844 dirhams because of an increase in prices.

The study stresses that the cost of living level in the capital, Abu Dhabi, is greater than that in the northern towns of the emirates, since the average-income family in Abu Dhabi spends about 25,000 dirhams a year on housing and the corresponding family in the northern towns of the emirates spends about 10,000 dirhams per year. If we add the rise in the prices and expenses the inhabitants of Abu Dhabi defray for food, fuel, clothing and other things in comparison with the prices prevailing in the northern emirates to that, we will find that middle-income families defray additional expenses of about 40 percent when they live in Abu Dhabi, the capital.

What about the Markets?

The closest example of the fluctuation in prices and speculation is what is happening in the refrigerated truck market near the port of Abu Dhabi and the fruit and vegetable market in the heart of the capital. The difference between what the owners of refrigerated trucks sell at and sales prices of the same goods in the fruit and vegetable market is great.

In touring the markets, the following became evident:

A box of yellow grapes sold by truck owners cost 20 dirhams and red grapes cost 25 dirhams.

The same box of grapes in the market was 30 dirhams; red grapes were 55 dirhams.

A box of tomatoes bought from truck owners was 20 dirhams; in the market it was 25 dirhams.

A carton of eggs from truck owners was 12 dirhams and from the market 15 dirhams.

A 15-kilogram bag of onions cost 20 dirhams bought from the truck owners and 25 dirhams in the market.

The price of a 10-kilogram sack of potatoes bought from truck owners was 30 dirhams and was 40 dirhams in the market.

The price of a sack of 33 oranges was 10 dirhams bought from the truck owners and the price of a kilogram of oranges was 7 dirhams in the market.

Opinions of Fruit and Vegetable Importers

At a meeting with some importers who own these trucks regarding the prices of the fruit and vegetables they sell to wholesale merchants, their costs, and the difficulties they may face when they come into Abu Dhabi, Mr Hamdan Sulayman said: "The sales process is related to supply and demand. There is no fixed price for any type of fruit or vegetable. For example, today they sell a box of tomatoes whose shipment cost 15 Lebanese pounds for 25 dirhams, and then they are going for 15 or 20 dirhams." This rise and fall in the price of the cargo, as Mr Hamdan Sulyman sees it, depends on the state of the market.

Mr Hamdan also pointed out that on some occasions some circumstances which might be outside their will and delay them on the road after they ship the goods sometimes force them to raise the price a little in compensation.

He said, "The lowest rental for a refrigerated truck is no less than 1,400 Jordanian dinars for every trip it makes, in addition to 1,000 dirhams in road expenses. They consider these sums large, especially if they occur at times which are not suitable for them, for example when they are in the midst of a large number of trucks, which forces them to lower price!"

Mr Fayiz Muhammad Dawud, a truck driver, said "We have no connection with the high prices of fruit and vegetables in the government markets in the recent period. We are not a party to the setting of the prices at which shop owners in the main market sell. All that concerns us is to sell the cargo and get rid of it before it is spoiled. The owner of the fruit and vegetable shop determines the price which he himself considers appropriate."

In his conversation, Mr Fayiz pointed out that the government's lack of oversight over prices in the local markets has caused the merchants to speculate in these prices and impose prices as they like.

In a tour of some shops in the vegetable market to ascertain vegetable prices, especially the prices paid by people who buy from the owners of refrigerated trucks, we found a great discrepancy in certain prices. For example, the owner of a refrigerated truck sells a 7-kilogram box of yellow grapes for 20 dirhams and red grapes for 25 dirhams, while the same box is sold for 50 and 55 dirhams in a number of vegetable shops in the market. When we ask the latter the price at which they buy this box from the truck owners, they answer that they bought it for 45 and 50 dirhams /respectively/.

'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn, owner of a vegetable shop in the market, says that the rise in these prices has no relation to events going on in the region but may be ascribed to their high purchase price from the truck owners. He pointed out that these prices are not stable, either, since they may rise further today or tomorrow or even drop, and the rise in prices may be attributed to the shortage of some types of vegetables and large demand for them.

/[27 Oct 80 pp 3, 7]/

/[Text]/ The remedy for the gross inflation in living expenses begins before all else by raising the salaries of people working in the government by a percentage close to the inflation rates which have come to 50 percent in the case of most prices of foodstuffs and consumer goods in the past 3 years, while the rate has been no less than 90 percent in the case of fruit and vegetables. A rise in the level of wages has become an inevitable necessity in the light of the difficult living conditions which citizens and expatriates alike are experiencing. This is what the federal government considers and is striving to achieve, but this step must be followed by other concomitant if not simultaneous ones in the same direction lest we become compelled to appeal again for a rise in the wage level to keep abreast of the new inflation in prices in a few more years.

The first of these steps, which we consider necessary for stopping the wave of inflation invading the society of the emirates, is for the government to hasten to subsidize the main food commodities, thendetermine rates of profit for the importers (wholesale merchants) and the retail merchants who sell the commodity directly to the consumer. Most countries in the Arab Gulf have taken this step in the context of regularing domestic economic activities, alleviating the people's sufferings from inflation, whether they are citizens or expatriates. That is followed directly by horizontal expansion in the establishment of cooperative societies, support for these societies in a manner guaranteeing that they perform the duty of lowering the insane prices of some goods, and efforts to stabilize basic consumer goods. The experiment is still not progressing, in spite of the establishment of 7 societies in various areas of the country. The latter have turned into supermarkets engaging in their activities in cooperative contexts but unable to compete with merchants or to lower prices because of the low amount of support offered them. The third step is for the government to proceed to build dozens of large storehouses and coolers for societies and merchants in areas which receive imported commodities and in towns, close to public markets, renting them out at token rates to societies and merchants to help reduce the cost of the goods.

In the annual report set out by the Bureau of Complaints and Recommendations headed by Mr Sa'id ibn Nasir, undersecretary of state for council of minister affairs, the bureau's study of inflation makes the importance of this phenomenon clear. The undersecretary states that complaints over the fact that prices have become inflated in a manner threatening the income levels of individuals, whether they have limited, average or even high incomes, have been increasing in the past few years. Inflation is general and comprehensive. It does not discriminate among family budgets. Every employee, minor or senior, sets out percentages for spending in accordance with his income. However, these proportions are constantly being disrupted and all savings eliminated severely because of fluctuations in the prices of commodities and rises in consumer good prices, at rates in excess of all expectations. This poses a danger to citizens' savings, which constitute a living buttress for the overall economics of the nation.

Concerning that phenomenon the bureau's report says: "For 6 consecutive years, complaints about inflation and high prices have been continuous and increasing. Markets in the country are experiencing an escalating price race. Some people

attribute that to the economic problems the world is suffering from, which have affected the rate by which prices rise and consequently the level of local prices."

In spite of the decrees which have been issued raising the standard of living of individuals in the country, it is to be observed that inflation is progressing at rates in excess of these stipulated raises. There is no doubt that efforts now being made to develop local industries will have their effect in the future in realizing positive steps toward the attainment of self-sufficiency in some commodities, on grounds that the road toward prosperity is through equalizing production and consumption on the local level.

Some people consider that the rise in prices may be explained to a large extent by the control by a group of merchants of the local market, their exploitation of the consumers' need for these goods and their determination to increase profits in an exaggerated fashion in exploitation of the absence of a supervisory or oversight agency over prices.

The merchants base their justification for the rise in prices on the paralysis in the markets and the high rentals of shops and dwellings, in addition to the low international production of main foodstuffs and limited exports, which have resulted in scant supply, high demand and the reflection of world prices on local ones.

Bureau Recommendations for Treating the Problem

In this regard, bureau officials present recommendations to remedy this phenomenon. These may be summarized as follows:

A start in the implementation of the consumer cooperative project, which to a large degree will help stabilize prices and provide the necessary commodities for consumers.

Accelerated formation of an agency to take charge of price planning and surveillance which will have the right to reprice goods and fix the rate of profit on all goods.

Expansion of imports.

Intensification of surveillance campaigns over merchants, oversight of importers, and determination of appropriate profits for them.

Support for and increased supplies of basic commodities.

Attention to projects to exploit and develop fish resources by offering all possible facilities for them.

Support for and increased supplies of basic commodities.

Establishment for a company or body which will take charge of supervising a limited fleet of fishing vessels and construct a fish preserving and freezing plant.

A Commodity Subsidy System in Neighboring Countries

We now come to the principle of subsidizing foodstuffs. Support is supposed to be offered for every commodity whose price is set, and these commodities are supposed to include such basic necessary commodities of daily consumption as sugar, tea, fats, all dairy products, meat, rice, vegetables and fresh fruit. Many Arab Gulf states have adopted this principle, among them, for instance:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the government sets the prices of a number of main foodstuffs while subsidizing these commodities at various rates in accordance with their price in the world market. The price of the commodity is determined in accordance with its price at the source in addition to freight and transportation rates and an added 10 percent as profit for the merchant. This profit rate is calculated after adding on the subsidy which the government offers for each commodity in a manner which will stabilize it. This subsidy differs from commodity to commodity according to its price level at the source. Sometimes it is 3 riyals, for example per kilogram of sugar and rice, and sometimes it is 2 to 3 riyals per kilogram of meat. The commodity's price is set and application of the pricing is supervised by the Saudi Ministry of Commerce. The government subsidizes sugar, rice, flour and meat of all kinds.

Bahrain: there the government sets the prices of a number of foodstuffs such as sugar, fats, flour and rice, commodities which it subsidizes. There are other commodities whose price the government sets without subsidizing them, for instance cheese, toothpaste, meat, chicken, soap, some vegetables, and also cars.

Kuwait: the government subsidizes meat, milk, rice, sugar, flour, fats and other major commodities, setting a price for them which all merchants are committed to applying. In Kuwait there is a specialized agency for overseeing pricing application called the Consumer Protection Department which is subordinate to the Ministry of Trade. Kuwait practices the system of supply cards by virtue of which each citizen or expatriate and his family is given his stipulated monthly share of subsidized foodstuffs. It should be noted that Kuwait has the system of cooperative societies, which enter into strong competition with merchants, by virtue of which a drop of about 90 percent is achieved in the prices of foodstuffs and consumer commodities.

Qatar: This follows the same system as Kuwait. It has a Supply Department subsidiary to the Ministry of Finance, imports main foodstuffs, and distributes them to retain merchants for sale to consumers in accordance with the volume set out for each individual in the supply card. These commodities include sugar, rice, oil, fats and flour. The municipality also imports meat and sells it at low prices through butchers. When the prices of some commodities rise, which they did for example in mid-1977, the government issues a decree dropping their prices at rates ranging from 5 to 10 percent. These commodities are rice, sugar, oil, fats, dairy products, milk, beef, and mutton. One should realize that their prices have been set in advance.

We have the experiences of these neighboring Gulf states before us, and anyone who wants to learn more than we have mentioned about them may do so. The fact remains that it has become necessary for the Ministry of Economy and Trade to intervene so that it may put a limit to escalating inflation and profit rates. If the market

is thus abandoned to caprice and temperament, no one, no matter what he does, will be able to stop the current of rising prices or limit this crushing wave. It is not desired to line the consumer up against the merchant; that would harm economic activity and would be of no benefit. Rather, what is desired is for the government to subsidize all basic foodstuffs in all emirates of the country. That could occur in the manner which the government of Kuwait has followed, whereby the Ministry of Commerce holds merchants to account on the basis of the sales price at the source or point of origin of every commodity through purchase invoices and freight and transport costs. It sets out its subsidy for the commodity then determines its sales price to the consumer, after determining a reasonable profit for the retail merchant and wholesaler. This is what the price committee formed for this purpose previously in the municipality of Abu Dhabi proceeded to do at the end of 1977, but its activity was not destined to continue. What is important is that the government, as represented by the Ministry of Economy and Trade, which must be given this right and must also be supplied with subsidy funds and powers of oversight over the setting and application of prices, take charge of the matter.

The Cooperatives' Position on Price Reductions

The second step which must also be followed to reduce prices of foodstuffs and consumer goods is the growth of cooperative societies and their expanded establishment. The cooperative societies which now exist have not yet realized the greatest goal in their establishment, that of reducing prices--in fact some of them, especially those existing in such remote areas as Zayid City in al-Zafrah, for example--consist of a large shop or small supermarket the size of a village or growing town. One can apply the statement to the society of Umm al-Qaywayn which has not received the requisite subsidies; the 200,000 dirhams which the government gives each society is hardly enough even for the lease on the shops the societies rent out. Naturally it would have been better had the government built the societies' locations and presented a model so that the societies would become not grocery or vegetable shops but full comprehensive consumer societies.

The memorandum presented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to the Council of Ministers on the condition of these societies, which number seven so far, stated that these societies have not realized their goals in the manner stipulated i their charters and that they are facing or are threatened with loss. Cooperative consciousness does not exist in their management.

Among the most important recommendations stated in the memorandum are the following:

Coordinating the role of supervising the cooperatives among the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Works and Municipalities and the Abu Dhabi National Foodstuffs Importing Company. We can modify this recommendation by unifying the supervising body in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs or the Ministry of Economy and Trade, as the government sees fit, instead of coordinating the supervision. What is important is that we not fragment and duplicate the supervision; rather, it would be better if we unified it. This is then followed by the recommendation that the Ministry of Public Works and Housing set forth and establish a model consumer society and rent it out or give it to the societies, especially when they are in the process of being formed, provided that each cooperative complex contain

branches for various foodstuffs and consumer goods. The role of the municipalities must be auxiliary to the societies, they will exempt them from light and water bills, provide plots of land on which to construct their locations, or help them if possible with readymade buildings which can be delivered to cooperative complexes. The role of the Abu Dhabi National Company, as a pilot company, must be to provide commodities for these companies at non-competitive prices through simplified payment procedures.

Establishing a cooperative federation for the societies which will practice coordination among them and take charge of import activities for the various goods and commodities in order to reduce costs on the one hand and regulate sales and transactions in the local market on the other.

Constructing central storehouses for the societies and branch storehouses lest the societies be put at the mercy of merchants and importers.

Concentrating on cooperative service complexes in new societies in residential areas. The societies will contain sections for vegetables, fruit, gorceries, and meat, refrigeration warehouses, shops for sewing and barbers, a bakery, and a post office. This recommendation would adopt the system of cooperative societies in Kuwait.

Kuwait's Experience with Cooperative Complexes

Since we have broached Kuwait's experience in consumer cooperative complexes, it is necessary to discuss it with a view to emulating it, because it is still the best cooperative experience among the countries of the region. These complexes are spread about all sections of Kuwait, in the heart of the city, in its outskirts and in its outlying areas; indeed, some sections have a cooperative complex and branch complexes which run services and bring them close to all inhabitants of each section. Every cooperative complex contains a large shop for consumer goods resembling a large supermarket; this has everything the consumer wants, from cheese and dairy products to jam, candy, kitchen utensils, carbonated drinks, perfume, and everything a person wants in his home. All the implements are the most advanced ones manufactured in various countries of the world and are of good style and model. Alongside this great shop, which can accommodate 200 people making purchases at one time, there are the following services: a health unit with a unique design, an integrated postal unit, shops selling fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy products, others selling books, newspapers and magazines (small bookstores), then candy shops, other shops for shoes, a barber shop, and a shop selling photographic equipment and one for children's games.

10 Percent Profit on Consumer Goods

All this is in one complex which the government builds then gives to cooperative societies to turn into cooperative complexes where prices are below any others in the market. No matter what happens the rate of profit on consumer goods of all types does not exceed 10 percent, or 15 percent for perfumes and cosmetics in these complexes. The profit rate is determined by a general Cooperative Federation list for these complexes, and every cooperative society in Kuwait belongs to it. There is another system for subsidized commodities sold in the consumer cooperatives

which the government sets forth and in which the societies' profit rates are spelled out. All supply cards are connected to the societies and every citizen and expatriate has a supply card in accordance with his residence. Every citizen and expatriate also has a health card, also in accordance with his residence.

Kuwaiti Societies Reduce Prices by 40 Percent

The government provides the societies with cooperative complex sites at token rent and also exempts them from electricity and water bills. Although these societies help in reducing the prices of 90 percent of the consumer goods and foodstuffs in Kuwait, some of them realize an annual profit which reaches 3 to 4 million dinars. This may all be attributed to government subsidy of commodities and to its continuing support for these societies, followed by support from the citizens. You will find no citizen living in a residential area or district who does not share the greatest number of society shares.

The cooperative Federation of societies takes charge of importing many of the basic goods and has broad experience in this sphere. However, that does not mean that the societies cannot venture to make purchases themselves. Rather, every society has the right to import any commodity it wants directly from world markets--even ashtrays, hangers, canned spices, cups and copper trays. These societies also deal with the central fruit and vegetable market in a normal fashion, buying wholesale from it and selling retail at prices far below those in the shops and the supermarkets. In general the prices of all foodstuffs and consumer goods in Kuwaiti cooperative societies are 30 to 40 percent lower than in similar shops in the heart and various sections of Kuwait, except for commodities whose prices are set. The shops have no power to raise their prices because they are subject to strict surveillance on the part of the relevant government agencies.

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/Text/ One alternative which has been raised and is now available in coping with the instability in foodstuffs and consumer goods prices and blatant inflation in them, is that of cooperative societies. A substantial number of such societies has in fact been established, but, in spite of the passage of the more than 3 years during which some of them have been engaged in their activities in the country, the cooperatives have lost their meaning and have not achieved the basic objective for which they were established, which is to help lower prices. Indeed most of them have turned into large grocery stores.

The fault is not with the cooperative societies or with the concept behind them--rather, it is with the fact that they have not been empowered to perform their role and have been left alone to carry out the experiment without real, effective support from the government.

In this report, we are responding to a number of specific questions. These are: what have the cooperative societies offered since their establishment? Have they been able to compete with merchants in order to lower prices? If they have not been able to achieve this objective, what are the reasons? Have obstacles stood in the way of that? What solutions have been propounded to enable the societies

to perform their role in providing basic commodities to citizens, achieving equilibrium in the market and limiting inflation?

Mr Kamil al-'Adl, general manager of the Dubai Cooperative Society, considers that cooperative societies are to be considered one of the main means which the government can rely on in carrying out purposeful policies with a high degree of accuracy while guaranteeing that no excessive departures from policies which have been set out occur, as contrasted with other channels which exist in the non-cooperative sector.

He stresses that if the government wants to create a kind of balance in prices, it can rely on the cooperative societies spread about over various areas of the country.

He propounds the notion of establishing a price stabilization agency which will encompass the cooperative sector and part of the private sector. This agency would include experts from the government and cooperative boards as well as representatives of major merchants "who are supposed to possess commitment and honesty." This agency will specify the degree of price stability desired and the types of commodities in which price stability is to be preserved, while setting out a policy to provide these goods throughout the year and determine the role of the cooperatives and the commercial bodies cooperating with them during the requisite time period.

The tasks of this agency "also" include determining the needed financing while taking into consideration that this financing will not mean that the government will pay the differences in price but may sometimes mean loans from the government or banks, provided that they are repaid in a specific period of time.

The Sharjah Society Has Not Played Its Full Role

Mrs 'A'ishah Muhammad al-Numan, chairman of the board of the Cooperative Society in Sharjah, says "The basic goal in establishing the society is to combat inflation, limit price hikes, and provide all the citizens' requirements for supply commodities and materials in the first place. However, the fact is that the society has not been able to play its part, although it was established 3 years ago. The reason is that the society does not obtain the requisite financial support, the support which all corresponding societies obtain in Kuwait and Qatar for example, in spite of the fact that we obtained support of 200,000 dirhams in subsidies (on establishment). I can assert that this amount is not adequate for opening one society branch, and we have not received any further support since.

"The expenditures of the society and its branches are also large and we have an employee structure and other expenses such as water and electricity. The society's resources are limited and the number of members does not exceed 80, including founding members. This may be attributed to an absence of cooperative consciousness or great interest in the cooperative's role in serving citizens.

"The society has a main branch in the al-Fayha' section of Sharjah and a branch in the al-Khan area as well as three branches for distributing subsidized commodities.

We are now preparing to open branches in the al-Raqqah section and move the main branch to al-Zahra' Street so that the society will be able to perform its role in full in serving the citizens."

An Arbitrary Increase

Concerning the society's role in lowering the prices of and providing commodities, the chairman of the Sharjah society says "The problem is really difficult. The society no longer has a role, and the reason is price instability in the market. There are no fixed prices for any commodity, and consequently the society cannot perform its mission.

"Examples are many: the price of 'Nido' milk sold last March was 165 dirhams per box and it has now reached 205 dirhams. Sugar used to sell for 65 dirhams per 50-kilogram sack, and its price rose without justification to 165 dirhams, then rose again to 210 dirhams just 2 days ago.

"We have stable prices in flour and rice only. The reason is perfectly clear--the government provides subsidies for flour and rice, but, since the government removed its subsidies from sugar, the price of that continued rising until it increased by 145 dirhams per bag!

"At the same time, all vegetable prices rose in an arbitrary, unreasonable manner; prices are at the whim of merchants. Consequently the price instability in all these supply commodities and materials has caused the most extreme damage to the cooperatives and in most cases has turned them into mere ordinary shops selling at the same prices as the market!

We Ask To Be Treated the Same as Athletic Clubs

"I would like to state this point: if the society has bought goods at very high prices, is it possible, unless it receives a large financial subsidy, for the society to offer the goods at low prices? If we do that, the losses will be large and will cause the end of the society."

Mrs 'A'ishah Muhammad al-Numan, head of the Sharjah Society, offers a number of recommendations and solutions to enable the cooperative societies actually to perform their role in providing goods and presenting them at suitable prices. She says, "First, it is necessary to allocate large annual financial support to each society. We have heard that the Council of Ministers has agreed to an annual support amounting to 150,000 dirhams per society. This is a minor amount and will not be sufficient to pay the electricity bills. It is necessary to seek to have it increased so that it will cover the bulk of the society's expenses."

She adds, "We really are requesting that the cooperative societies be on a par with sporting clubs in terms of subsidies, because the societies' work in providing the citizens' requirements, combatting inflation and serving families is not less important than the role of the sporting clubs!" She also requests that a main center be established for cooperative societies encompassing the state of the emirates, performing the role of a cooperative federation supervising the societies, providing supply commodities and materials of all kinds at low prices and enabling the cooperative society to perform its mission.

'Adnan 'Attar, manager of the Sharjah Cooperative Society, says that there is another aspect to the problem of the increase in prices--and one of its most important causes--and that is the merchants' "recourse" to re-exporting supply goods and materials from the emirates. It is true that the goods and materials are available in large quantities, but the merchants re-export them and set prices as they like, and this speculation must stop!

With the Consumers

The citizen 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad, whom we met in the Sharjah Society, defined the problem by saying "The most important thing the cooperative societies do is to supply goods and materials at prices below those in ordinary shops, but the societies have turned into stores through the insane rise in prices. It is necessary that the government encourage cooperative societies to perform their role."

In the sales branch for subsidized supply commodities in Sharjah, the citizen Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Shaybah said: "We just get subsidized rice and flour. We are in direct need of having subsidized sugar brought back. Prices have risen to a very large extent, which no one can cope with, and citizens are also asking for support for fats, oils and soap along with renewed subsidization of sugar and resumption in sales of it in the subsidized commodity branches."

Mr 'Umar Hasan al-Sharif, manager of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Cooperative Department, considers that since the issuance of the law establishing the consumer cooperatives in 1976 the government has made every effort to make citizens understand the economic and social importance of cooperative activity, with the goal of trying to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of people with limited incomes and resources. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, in accordance with the directives of His Excellency Sayf al-Jarwan, the labor minister and the "available resources," has striven to spread cooperative societies throughout the country in an attempt on the ministry's part to smash the monopoly over the citizens' requisite consumer goods and materials. These societies have managed to provide citizens with consumer goods at appropriate prices at their places of work and have "also" distributed state-subsidized commodities to the citizens.

Some of these societies have succeeded in realizing profits in the brief period of their activity. "The life of the most senior cooperative is 3 years."

Obstacles

In a report the Cooperative Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has prepared on obstacles and problems that keep the cooperative societies from attaining their goals, many problems were "laid bare," including:

The scant financial support the government is providing for cooperative societies.

The absence of buildings and headquarters for cooperative societies, which causes them to resort to the use of unsuitable headquarters and imposes on them high rents which add to their material burdens.

The intense commercial competition to which the societies are exposed, in view of their scant resources, which do not help them import the goods they require,

compelling them to obtain their commodity requirements from local markets at high prices.

The societies' commitment to provide good commodities at cooperative prices and not to try to realize a material profit as a basic goal adds to their burdens and costs and involves them in material losses.

The cooperative societies' defraying of additional expenses from which they could be exempted, such as water and electricity bills.

The inadequacy of the societies' administrative and labor structure, because of their material inability to bear many burdens.

The decline in the societies' capital with each passing year, as an inevitable consequence of the foregoing, and the preservation of their existence and attainment of their goals.

The failure to pay out profits to members in the previous period of cooperative activity, which has prompted some participants in these societies to demand the withdrawal of the sums they had contributed to them, out of fear of losing their funds.

Recommended Solutions for Supporting the Societies

In a frank discussion of the problems the cooperative societies in the country are facing, Mr 'Umar al-Sharif, manager of the Cooperative Department, defined the solutions the department presented to "officials in the ministry," which will "if realized" help develop support for cooperative societies. These include:

Adoption by the government of the promulgation of a plan to build model cooperative societies and spread them about over the various areas of the country.

Offering loans at easy terms on easy conditions to cooperative societies.

Exempting cooperative societies in the country from payment of electricity and water bills.

Establishment of an institute for cooperative studies in the country to graduate domestic staffs who will understand the nature of cooperative work and will be able to bear responsibility for it.

Establishment of a general federation of cooperatives in the country which will contain all the cooperative societies now existing or to be built in the future, with the goal of increasing relations among them and helping them with regard to their activities, as well as overseeing cooperative activity.

He says that the government is expressing extensive interest in the cooperative movement as a means to propound solutions to the problems the masses are suffering from.

In the context of this interest, the Council of Ministers agreed last month to give each cooperative society a maximum annual support of 150,000 dirhams. The

'Abdallah Ahmad al-Khatib, a major vegetable dealer who specializes in trading in local vegetable production, says that a box of tomatoes whose price before the holidays came to 150 dirhams has, as a result of the delays in refrigerated trucks and the events in the region, now started to sell for 15 dirhams and its price will go down to 7 dirhams next January. The reason is the advent of local production in large quantities.

Every day more than 60 trucks come to the markets of Dubai and Sharjah bringing vegetables coming from Ra's al-Khaymah. The load in each truck is 400 boxes of various types. Large amounts of vegetables are sent to the markets in Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, 'Ajman and Umm al-Qaywayn.

Wholesale merchants compare their prices with those of the supermarkets, saying that at a time when a kilogram of tomatoes is being sold in the shops for 7 dirhams you will see it for 3 dirhams a box in the market, because the consumer defrays the supermarket's expenses in the form of rent, labor, electricity and a high rate of fruit and vegetable spoilage.

Seasons and Difficulties

The war has brought grave losses on many merchants. Some of them have paid prices five or six times those of Iranian and Lebanese imports, but events have prevented the latter from arriving because their own markets have required these items. Lebanese and Jordanian vegetables have started to be sent to Iraq to provide for the latter's consumption requirements. In addition difficulties have been afflicting trucks and refrigerated vehicles for a long period because of the security measures that the various countries have taken along the border areas.

To the events' influence on increased prices, Muhammad Yusuf Khammas adds the fact that fruit and vegetables have seasons in different export regions such as Pakistan, India and Lebanon: "Some imports which came by land or by launches have started to come by plane, multiplying prices and adding to the consumers' burden. However, we have found alternatives to the Iranian onions and watermelons we had been importing in the markets of India and Pakistan." Muhammad Yusuf Khammas, a major imported fruit and vegetable dealer, says "It is true that the increase in the prices of some goods has reached 50 percent, but all kinds are now available and there is no shortage. What I would like to draw attention to is the fact that prices to the top merchants have increased too because of the increase in prices abroad and high freight rates: many of the goods which we used to import from India have doubled in price. The price of grapes we would import for 3 rupees has now gone to 6 rupees; the price of a sack of onions has gone from 1.5 to 4 dirhams.

Workers' Wages

"Prices of some commodities are rising in the markets because of a delay in ship arrivals. The wages of workers and porters have doubled in the recent period, multiplying our burdens."

He adds, "We in the Dubai market import many goods for export to the markets of Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia; every day we send from 10 to 15 refrigerated trucks to these markets, and six to 14 launches and 10 to 16 refrigerated trucks come to us. Sometimes we send these goods by sea to the markets in Bahrain."

Council of Ministers also determined to allocate the sum of 500,000 dirhams to hold training courses for society employees. A Council of Ministers decree was also issued, at its session on the eighth of last month, to have the Ministries of Public Works and Housing and Planning study plans to establish cooperative societies, with the proviso that the necessary credits for this be included in next year's budget and that the conclusions of this study be presented to the Council of Ministers.

Finally, the main signs on the road to the establishment of a strong cooperative movement in the state of the emirates have become clear. The cooperative movement's problems are known. Solutions are ready. Hope is being attached to the government agencies' interest in implementing these solutions. Finally, one awaits the signal to start a takeoff on the road "called" cooperation.

/[29 Oct 80 p 3]/

/[Text]/ In a period which has witnessed import bottlenecks and the arrival of trucks across the borders, vegetable prices have multiplied. However, this problem has started to diminish with the advent of local vegetable production and the creation of alternative markets.

What are the views of major merchants and importers regarding the price increases which have been burdening the consumers?

What are the views of specialists, chambers of commerce and industry, and the Ministry of Economy and Trade?

What is the picture now in the markets of the northern emirates, especially in Dubai?

The farms in Ra's al-Khaymah, al-Fujayrah and al-'Ayn have succeeded in providing local consumer requirements for vegetables and eliminating the effects of the shortage which the war between Iraq and Iran has created.

Throughout the next 6 months, vegetables will be available in large quantities and at low prices and will come fresh to the consumer.

Merchants have started receiving large amounts of commodities they have imported to make up the shortage in imports which used to come from Iran such as onions and some types of fruit, seasoning and vegetables. Heavy refrigerated trucks which previously came from Iraq have also started arriving regularly across the Saudi border.

Fingers of accusation have been pointed at merchants, and the merchants have complained about world prices, the high rents for shops and workers' wages. It has been asserted that these factors have raised prices by 30 percent in the past year and that more than 20 percent of the increase has occurred in the past 2 months. Officials have another view.

What do the merchants say?

He says that wholesale prices per box now are as follows: grapes, 37 dirhams; pomegranates, 40; pears and guaves, 33; tomatoes (6 kilograms), 12; melons, 30; apples, 60; bananas, 28; eggs, 145; African oranges, 29; lemons, 65 dirhams. When sold retail, they increase by 2 dirhams, one for profit and one for transport and porters.

Reducing the Effects of the War

The prices, in the opinion of many merchants, have regained their equilibrium and the effects of the early stage of the war between Iraq and Iran have been reduced. Goods whose prices came to 50 dirhams per box before the holidays have now dropped to 20 and the alternative markets have provided much of what had been imported from Iran. This is what Ahmad Muhammad al-Habbal stresses: imports from alternative markets such as Jordan, Pakistan, India, Lebanon, Turkey and Oman are taking the place of imports from Iran, which used to reach a rate of 10 launches a day bringing about 5,000 tons of fruit and vegetables.

A vegetable dealer with 30 years' experience in the markets observes that fruit and vegetable prices are lower than in the Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia markets, especially as regards commodities coming from the markets of Pakistan and India. Imports from the markets of Lebanon and Jordan are cheaper there because the distance to these markets is shorter than to the markets in the emirates.

He adds that the number of trucks of average capacity which depart from the Dubai markets for the various emirates number 500 every day and that the price per box is 1 dirham higher in Sharjah and 3 dirhams higher in Abu Dhabi, al-'Ayn and Ra's al-Khaymah than in the Dubai market.

Going to Excess

Major merchants consider that small merchants go to excess in setting their profits. Nasir 'Abdallah, a major grocery store goods importer, gives an example, stating "the owner of a supermarket obtains a 24-can box of pineapples for 31 dirhams and sells it for 48 dirhams. He sets his profits at this level. As regards sugar, the increase came to 51 percent last month but small merchants made the consumer bear a two-fold increase."

'Abdallah Nasir Husayn says that the merchants are facing many losses in many commodities and that the wholesale merchant has preferred lower profits in exchange for selling greater amounts, while the small merchants prefer high markups.

Meat Is an International Problem

The doubling of meat prices was not caused by the war alone; rather, it was caused by an increase in meat prices in the producing countries and an increase in shipping costs.

'Umar Kan'an, a meat importer, says that Bulgarian and Rumanian meat is no longer arriving, because of the Iraqi-Iranian war, and that Australian meat prices have increased by 3 dirhams per kilogram. The wholesale price for mutton has come to 14 dirhams and for the consumer to 16 dirhams per kilogram. The price of frozen meat has gone to from 9.5 to 11 dirhams; some butchers sell it as if it were fresh,

exploiting the shortage, high demand and scant supply on the world market.

Muhammad Ahammas says that the price of fresh meat imported from India rose from 10 to 20 dirhams there. For 9 months meat has no longer been coming from India because of measures the Indian government has taken but will probably be exported again at the start of next month.

This has raised the prices of meat, especially beef, whose price has risen to 25 dirhams for the consumer and 20 dirhams wholesale; the wholesale price of mutton has increased from 10 to 14 dirhams.

The Best Ways To Fight Inflation

What is the opinion of specialists in the Ministry of Economy and Trade and chambers of commerce and industry now?

Increased production and the availability of new income sources are the best means to combat inflation and cope with the increase in prices as officials from chambers of commerce and industry view it.

Economics experts consider that the solution lies in government intervention by establishing strong cooperative societies which are influential and can import commodities by themselves and set competitive prices for them which can bring down the general level of prices in the market. They consider that the main reason for the price problem is that some commodities are controlled by a limited number of merchants who set prices through their control of the supply and insist on obtaining a large profit margin which in the case of some commodities may come to 300 percent. In addition, importers and small dealers translate all increases in world prices to their advantage; if the increase is 5 percent, the consumer will suddenly be faced with an increase of 30 percent.

Sayf al-Gharir, chairman of the board of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Dubai, defends the merchants and assigns responsibility for the evolution of world prices by saying,

"There has been much talk about high prices and exploitation of these circumstances by some importers and merchants. The fact is that inflation has now become general in the whole world. Prices are constantly increasing and the value of currency is constantly decreasing. Most countries have been compelled to devalue their currency; we have found the consumer screaming and asking about the news in the papers, since his few dirhams are no longer enough to buy what he previously bought for the same price. Everyone has started groaning with complaints over inflation, because raises in personal salaries are no longer keeping up with the increase in prices.

"Advanced countries intervene to provide major goods and services at prices suitable for small consumers; the government must intervene by increasing production and income sources in an organized fashion solving people's problems, and providing the consumer with goods in appropriate ways at suitable prices."

The chairman of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry requests that the consumer be aware; if he does not like a merchant's prices, he should look for better,

lower prices because the free market has the advantage of competition which does not exist in other markets. He considers that dealing with increases in prices means increasing the number of shops, since this will increase competition, and high prices will cause investors and capital owners to build, establish and construct, which is the most important benefit of competition. Concerned figures and officials in the chambers of commerce and industry consider that the costs of large shops have their compensations and that obtaining goods from wholesalers and the market is better than looking for them in a supermarket, whose costs and profits are borne by the consumer and the small shop as well. Vendors in the market defray no expenses, and that influences the general price level.

The War Has Had No Effect

The chairman of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry considers that our markets have not been influenced by the Iraqi-Iranian war, except in the case of certain minor goods which had been imported from these markets. He said "The effect falls on the two belligerent states, not on our markets."

Mr Sayf Ahmad al-Gharir says "It is the foreign companies which are benefiting all down the line; we, the officials, since we have surplus funds to invest in their countries and have interests which we are not developing, are leaving the price increases and the shipping and insurance costs to them, contenting ourselves with telling them 'You are exploiters.' The alternative, in my opinion, is for use to face their price increases by increasing output, to provide the ships that carry our cargoes, and to produce what we need. We should raise the prices of the oil we ourselves produce above the prices in the Rotterdam markets and bear the responsibility for that. A power plant annually consumes hundreds of millions in fuel and /illegible/ while the gas is released into the air. It is necessary that we benefit from it and also rely on fuel and oil to provide our drinking water, which is multiplying our burdens.

"I hope that the government will provide citizens with a productive project which will increase his income, double our production and create a base for the post-petroleum era, because increasing production will be an alternative and the only solution to the increases in prices."

An Alternative to Pricing

Experts in economics and planning in the Ministry of Economics and Trade consider that it is necessary for the state to intervene by establishing cooperative societies, since those are the most preferable alternative to the system of pricing or price setting, a system which has numerous problems and is based on the need to create an independent agency to conduct oversight over prices, engage in specific indoctrination of supervisors and promulgate a deterrent law. The lesson in their opinion is in the implementation, not penalties and laws.

Economists state that the prices prevalent in our markets are a direct translation of world prices and shipping and insurance costs, with a reasonable profit margin for the big merchant, some middlemen and retailers added in.

Experts estimate that the profit the retail merchant acquires from fruit and vegetables is no lower than 200 percent because of the nature of these goods and the

speed with which they are exposed to spoilage. This rate increases in the case of other foodstuffs and luxury goods because the merchant finds that any foreign increase is an opportunity to increase his prices and takes that as a justification.

Economists point to the massive profit margin which retailers obtain through the big discrepancy between the local price level and international prices, in addition to the phenomenon of sales, to which most stores resort in order to dispose of their surplus goods after they have realized sufficient profits. This is because the retailer insists on obtaining a greater profit and stands in solidarity with most merchants in confronting the consumer. This is apparent in the vegetable market. However, we find that prices do vary from shop to shop and town to town, and the reason is greed and lack of surveillance.

Officials in chambers of commerce and industry in the country have another opinion, which is that the small consumer goes to excess in his consumption and insists on obtaining certain goods which he can do without in the event they are in short supply or their prices are high. In this area, the consumer has lived off fish and meat a long time, and he can do without expensive goods for a while.

Between the recommendation of chambers of commerce and industry officials that production and opportunities for free competition be increased, and the view of economists regarding the provision of cooperative societies which are able to compete, lower prices and raise incomes, lie the means to confront the constant price increases.

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